FILM QUARTERLY

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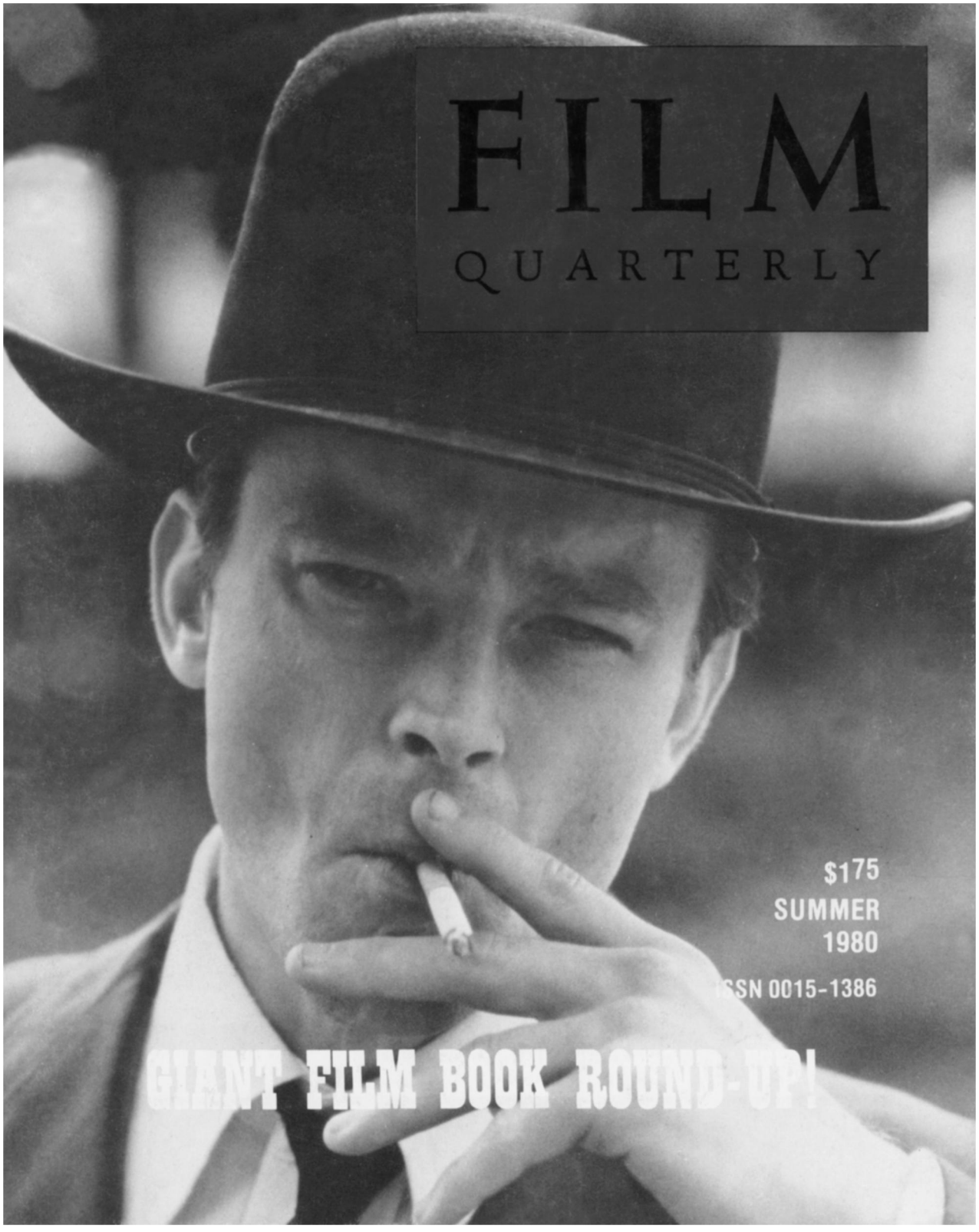
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COVER: Brad Dourif as Hazel in John Huston's *Wise Blood* (based on the novel by Flannery O'Connor.

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Editor's Notebook

GOOD BOOKS, HARD TIMES

Within the memory of many people active in film teaching and critical writing, the number of worthwhile and lasting film books could be counted on the fingers, and the total of all film books in print could be contained on a couple of library shelves. Now, as will be abundantly clear from the scope and variety of this issue's film book survey, publications in film rival those of many older scholarly disciplines. Each year sees the appearance of several distinguished volumes in history, criticism, theory, director studies, reference, and other categories —plus a flood of useful, solid manuals, texts, scripts, biographies, and other works. In earlier times good libraries might choose to ignore the field without much damage to their reputations; but the problem now is to stretch shrinking budgets to stay at least respectably abreast of the field, so as to serve the increasing numbers of students and scholars now found throughout the American academic world. As the reviews and annotations in this issue testify, some mediocre books (and a few really abominable ones!) manage to get published, but the general level of scholarly maturity rises steadily. Books matter, in the field, and perhaps more than they ever have; in a period when some serious journals have gone under for financial reasons, and others have turned for survival toward lighter and more popular materials, the burden of carrying thought forward falls more heavily upon books and the people and institutions who support them. Times are hard, but a good book is still an investment in lasting satisfaction that's hard to beat. Buy the books that matter to you, and support your library's efforts to maintain its book acquisitions and its periodicals program!

CONTRIBUTORS

LINDA ARTEL is information officer at the Pacific Film Archive. PETER BRUNETTE teaches at George Mason University and is writing a book on Rossellini. ROSS CARE has composed scores for several animation films. DAVID COURSEN also writes for *Cinemonkey*. MICHAEL DEMPSEY also writes for *American Film* and *Film Comment*. EVELYN EHRLICH, at NYU, is work-

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GOOD BOOKS, HARD TIMES

Within the memory of many people active in film teaching and critical writing, the number of worthwhile and lasting film books could be counted on the fingers, and the total of all film books in print could be contained on a couple of library shelves. Now, as will be abundantly clear from the scope and variety of this issue's film book survey, publications in film rival those of many older scholarly disciplines. Each year sees the appearance of several distinguished volumes in history, criticism, theory, director studies, reference, and other categories —plus a flood of useful, solid manuals, texts, scripts, biographies, and other works. In earlier times good libraries might choose to ignore the field without much damage to their reputations; but the problem now is to stretch shrinking budgets to stay at least respectably abreast of the field, so as to serve the increasing numbers of students and scholars now found throughout the American academic world. As the reviews and annotations in this issue testify, some mediocre books (and a few really abominable ones!) manage to get published, but the general level of scholarly maturity rises steadily. Books matter, in the field, and perhaps more than they ever have; in a period when some serious journals have gone under for financial reasons, and others have turned for survival toward lighter and more popular materials, the burden of carrying thought forward falls more heavily upon books and the people and institutions who support them. Times are hard, but a good book is still an investment in lasting satisfaction that's hard to beat. Buy the books that matter to you, and support your library's efforts to maintain its book acquisitions and its periodicals program!

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epics, short stories, tales, fabliaux, and so on. Beyond the analysis of generic differences there lies the determination of what narrative is *in itself*." (p. 9) Pursuit of this inquiry leads to a very different book from Culler's, a different kind of book. Its focus is the nature of narrative, not a group of theories or individual theories of narrative. Chatman brings in various theories, or parts of theories, where relevant to his scheme. "My purpose is not to polemicize, but to synthesize the most powerful insights—Anglo-American, Russian, and French. I argue for no particular school." (p.11)

What is the scheme of the book? Between an introduction and a brief conclusion, the main body of the book is comprised of four long chapters: "Story: Events," "Story: Existents," "Discourse: Narrated Stories," and "Discourse: Covert Versus Overt Narrators." The division of narrative into story and discourse goes back to Aristotle. As refined by structuralist theory, the distinction becomes:

> each narrative has two parts: a story (*histoire*), the content or chain of events (actions, happenings), plus what may be called the existents (characters, items of setting); and a discourse (*discours*), that is, the expression, the means by which the content is communicated. In simple terms, the story is the *what* in a narrative that is depicted, discourse the *how*. (p. 19).

Implicit in this scheme is an axiom of great importance for structuralist work on narrative: "the necessity of separating narrative structure from any of its mere manifestations, linguistic or otherwise." (pp. 15-16) In much structuralist work, however, the axiom is an abstract one, empty of content, for all discussions tend to arise from and return to literature, and all examples are drawn from literary texts.

The subtitle of *Story and Discourse* is "Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film" and much of the book lives up to that title. Chatman discusses film, as well as literature, in both chapters on story and in both on discourse, although there are only three sections out of fifty on specific film topics—"Story-Space in Cinematic Narrative," "Point of View in Film," and "Interior Monologue in the Cinema." Most sections discuss filmic examples as well as literary ones; some that do not, such as the long discussion of character, apply to film as well as to literature. For film scholars, it is here that the uniqueness and value of the book will lie. But this double object also aids the inquiry into narrative itself, insuring that it does not become a theory of literary fiction passing for a theory of narrative generally.

Story and Discourse deserves praise for the lucidity of its organization, both overall and local, and for the clarity and grace of its writing, so rare in English texts on these topics. The selection and deployment of clarifying examples for nearly every point is one of the book's principal glories. It is difficult to imagine a better book on narrative for college film and literature courses. It should be made available in paperback immediately.

—BRIAN HENDERSON

CONTRIBUTORS, continued

ing on a book about French film during the German occupation. JOHN FELL is the author of *A History of Films*. SANDY FLITTERMAN is an editor of *First Discourse* and is writing a book on women and representation in the development of the French cinema. CLAUDIA GORBMAN, a musician, teaches at Indiana University. BRIAN HENDERSON's book, *A Critique of Film Theory*, was recently published by Dutton. PETER HOGUE teachers at Chico State University. ANDREW HORTON, editor of *European Filmmakers and the Art of Adaptation*, teaches at the University of New Orleans. KAREN JAEHNE lives in Berlin and has done research on Hungarian and Greek cinema. WILLIAM JOHNSON is the author of *Focus on the Science Fiction Film*. ANN KAPLAN teaches at Rutgers. BRUCE KAWIN wrote *Mindscreen*. MARSHA KINDER is co-editor of *Dreamworks*, a new journal just published by Human Sciences Press. JAY LEYDA is Gottesman Professor of Film at NYU. SCOTT MacDONALD teaches at Utica College and has written on avant-garde film for various journals. BILL NICHOLS is the editor of *Movies and Methods*. HARRIET POLT has written for the *Berkeley Monthly* and several film journals. JONATHAN ROSENBAUM writes for *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Film Comment*. CHRISTOPHER B. SHARRETT teaches film at Villanova. MICHAEL TARANTINO writes for many film journals, and is currently trying to escape from New Jersey. DON WILLIS is working on a supplement to his *Horror and Science Fiction Film Checklist*. FABRICE ZIOLKOWSKI is working on a PH.D. at UCLA.

ART/THEORY/ CRITICISM/POLITICS

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MICHAEL DEMPSEY

Inexplicable Feelings: An Interview With Peter Weir

Peter Weir came to Los Angeles in March for the Filmex première of his latest film, The Plumber *(see review in this issue), which he wrote and directed for Australian television. His preceding films* (The Cars That Ate Paris, 1974; Picnic at Hanging Rock, 1975; The Last Wave, 1977) *had achieved belated American releases and audiences during the preceding two years. Then, in a startling development, Warner Brothers asked him to replace Herbert Ross as director of* The Thorn Birds, *its mammoth proposed production of Colleen McCulloch's best-selling novel. Weir spent considerable time in Los Angeles working on this film before dropping it—to be replaced (at this writing) by Arthur Hiller. Now he was back in search of backing for* The Year of Living Dangerously.

The Plumber *was broadcast throughout Australia?*

Yes. It was one of a series of six films called Australian Theatre of the Week or something like that. In fact, I think they made five of them and had rejected a script for the sixth. Over dinner one night with one of the executives involved, I told him the story of a dinner party in London and this girl and this plumber. He said, "That's a great little story." I said, "Yes, it is. As a matter of fact, I did write it up as a short story, planning to use it at some stage." But it just wasn't cinema material, I thought. He said, "Why don't you do it to complete this series?" So I agreed to write it; I wasn't going to direct it. And then the feature that I was putting together at the time was delayed. Also, I got interested in it and agreed to direct it. I made *The Plumber* late in '78. I didn't make a film in '79.

In this country, if a major director of theatrical films works in television, this is generally assumed to mean career trouble or a step down.

I was aware of that to some extent, particularly the small budget. I felt very nervous because I thought I would be stripped of the normal time I have to make a film, stripped of all polish. In fact, I won't have a lot of the craft that I've had in other films, and this is going to force me to search out the essence of the dramatic and entertainment possibilities.

Does this prestige angle apply in Australia?

No, not at all. Mind you, not many are doing it because they're simply too busy making movies, my fellow directors. But I think it's clearly what we're going to have to do with what was once called the "low budget" film. Apart from *Mad Max*, there have been a string of them—I would guess over a dozen of these films made for, say, around half a million dollars—which have really done no business whatsoever. And I think they really should have been made for television because we don't have the same network situation as you do here. It's also easy to say in the Australian sense, because television companies now may not take these films.

Was there a large lag between The Plumber *and your involvement with* The Thorn Birds?

Yes. I spent a large part of 1979 developing a film then called *Gallipoli*, a World War I story about a very famous Australian defeat in southern Turkey. The investors withdrew from this project.

Culture contrast: THE LAST WAVE

So, in mid '79, I took an option on a book called *The Year of Living Dangerously*, which is the reason I'm here now, with the screenplay of that book.

Gallipoli *would have to be a huge project, wouldn't it?*

It was. It's not now. It's been rewritten in such a way that it ends with a battle incident and the early part of the film is getting there. It's the story of two young fellows and all the difficulties they have in getting to the war. One's too young to join the army. The other can't ride a horse. They both want to get into the Australian Light Horse, which was a prestigious mounted infantry. So they go from camp to camp trying to get in. The one who's too young, who's an expert horseman, teaches the other to ride. And the other, who's a real con man, teaches him how to forge birth certificates and how to look older with various tricks. They help each other to get in.

If it is scaled down, can you get all the money for it in Australia?

No, no. That's, again, one of the problems. The subject matter that I'm drawn to is now so expensive because of inflation and crew costs.

How do you respond to the Terry Bourke article quoted in Sight and Sound *(Spring 1979) which accuses some Australian film-makers, including you, and with special reference to Fred Schepisi and* The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith, *of "hype" tactics and spending that could damage the [Australian film] industry's financial credibility"?*

He's just not in any sense an authority, Terry Bourke, or a particularly interesting commentator on the film scene. He's a director himself, in fact. I remember the article. But it was quite meaningless. It's as if the only reason you make a film is to make money. I would suggest not going into film at all if that is the only reason. Unless you went in as a studio. Leave it to the American industry. Why have a film industry in Australia? It's rather silly. The odds are against you. We know this, Terry Bourke knows this, everybody knows this.

Part of the reason is that there aren't enough people in Australia to support a large film industry?

Yes. And we don't speak a "foreign" language. It's not an argument like, say, "In France, they want to hear their language spoken." Here we were consuming the American product and seemingly quite happy. Why have that film industry? If you want to make money, why not go into minerals or something that's safer? We went into it for many reasons, and the benefits have been extraordinary. We've taken information about our country to various parts of the world. I mean, that may not interest Terry Bourke; it might not even interest me, particularly. But, you know, the fuss made by one film, even if it fails, can lead the way to another film. A Fred Schepisi, who didn't realize he couldn't get his budget back, presumably, on *Blacksmith*, is recognized as a fine director, which he is, and is offered other projects. (He's doing something here for Lorimar.) Take, in my case, three feature films. The first one, *The Cars That Ate Paris*, a complete financial flop. *Picnic at Hanging Rock* a giant success. *The Last Wave* a break-even film. Fred Schepisi's first film, *The Devil's Playground*, was a money-back film, and they may even be into profit by now. It was a very low-budget film, a fine film, and very much enjoyed in Australia and Europe. Gillian Armstrong's just made her first film, *My Brilliant Career*, which is clearly going to be a major financial hit, replacing *Picnic*, I think, as our biggest domestic film. George Miller made *Mad Max*, which is an enormous hit. Phil Noyce's first film, *Newsfront*, will make its money back. Don Crombie's first film, *Caddie*, was very successful financially. Now these would be outweighed by the flops, overall. But a lot of those who made bad pictures have never surfaced again because they were just poor film-makers.

A few years ago, there was a quick film wave in Quebec, and then it was gone. Is there any sign that this might happen in Australia?

I really don't know and, to be quite honest, I don't really think much about it because I'm too busy working. But the will is still there, and I think that is perhaps the most important thing. The only thing I might say is that we should consider television more and more seriously for the low-budget film. The art film as such is gone. The term just doesn't exist anymore. It's been destroyed by people of my generation around the world, particularly in America, who have found a way of blending commerce with ideas or narrative with intelligence. I think it was a right change.

Are you going to become—whether it's a good, bad, or indifferent thing—an international English-language director, inevitably, as you go on, as several British directors have?

I honestly don't know. I've turned down three or four really strong go projects, a couple that were very interesting but weren't right for me. The two projects I have now, although international in theme, are Australian-based projects. So at this point it hasn't happened that way. It's a case of being able to function in Australia. I get an idea for a film, and the budget is around two or three million dollars. The money doesn't exist in Australia—I could maybe get a million—and there I am looking for the rest. I have quite a lot of friends here in the industry and the studios. They're liable to say to me, "Fine, we'll back it, but can you set it here?"

Was it the Los Angeles runs of your films that got studio people interested in you?

Yes, absolutely. Both *The Last Wave* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock* had been out and around in Europe and elsewhere. They were somewhat known, and some American industry exectives had seen them or heard of them. But it wasn't until Filmex in '78 that I was invited into the club. I could sense a feeling of tremendous excitement. I was proud of the screening. It was packed out, people trying to get tickets, just on the hearsay or from the title or the feel of it or something. There was also a critical article in *New West* by Steve Farber. I've always remained indebted to him for that; he did it because he enjoyed the film. [Note: readers will also want to consult another excellent *New West* article by Stephen Farber, "Natural Dangers: A Conversation with Peter Weir," in the November 19, 1979 issue.] But I wasn't going to Filmex, nor was the producer. The investors had run out of money for that sort of thing. Our agent here rang and said, "This review in *New West* is going to sell the picture at the festival now or never. You must come and help that." So the producer and I scraped the money together to send me over; the investors, of course, later picked the bill up. After the first screening, I phoned to the producer and said,

"Get the next plane out of Sydney. The picture's going to sell." At that stage, there were two or three bids from the independents. The majors and the major-minors had already turned it down, so it looked like we weren't going to get a sale in America at that point. *Picnic* followed fairly close after that.

What has your experience with an American studio, Warner Brothers, been like?

It was a pleasure to have a good sum of pre-production money at one's disposal to fly off, to go anywhere at any time, for surveys and what have you. To have a really top screenwriter, Ivan Moffat. To have almost anything you wanted, to meet people, to do anything associated with getting the screenplay right. I was given total creative freedom, within fairly logical limits. I mean, who would want to really shift around the structure of a hit novel too radically? I certainly didn't want to.

A story had it that the budget was going to be $20 million and that you preferred making it a smaller-scale film.

I don't think I've ever made or not made films in terms of scales. They're all big, creatively big; the budgets are relative. My first film cost $1200. Every one of those dollars was garnered at great cost, and I was terribly aware of getting that twelve hundred back. In fact, one of the elements which attracted me was to make a big Hollywood film. I'm sure many directors, most of us, would like to have a try at it, under our own terms, of course. There was a tremendous feeling of ease not to have to struggle in certain areas. As an independent film-maker, you're uncertain all the way along about where the next advance of money is coming from or if it's coming. Of course, we in Australia are fortunate in being able to apply to the government, the Australian Film Commission, for development monies. So I enjoyed the comfort and the firepower of the studio picture, and I was dealing with amazingly professional people who were also extremely generous in the creative area of leaving it to me. I was really my own worst enemy. I tried to tackle material which was alien to me, in the mistaken belief that in the screenplay I could somehow shape it toward my view of things. I realized with horror that I was quite likely to turn in a film which disappointed us all, a terrible hybrid film. In fact, the style of the novel must be embraced. So, reluctantly, I pulled out. Fortunately not too late.

Ivar Kants in THE PLUMBER

I would like to ask how The Cars That Ate Paris *was changed by its American distributor (New Line). The American Version, known as* The Cars That Eat People, *seems to run about 70 minutes (the original length being 91 minutes). In this version, the hero sounds intended as an American tourist from Brooklyn . . .*

Yeah, they did that.

But the voice doesn't sound Brooklynese. And, while individual scenes are striking, the continuity seems garbled.

No, it's not my film. My film didn't work commercially, but it was well received by the critics in Europe and particularly London. It didn't travel very widely anywhere. When I saw what the American distributor had done to it, I was shattered. Because there you had the classic B-picture format of the town with a secret. I was always intrigued by the idea of the Cornish pirates early in the last century who moved a light at night so that ships would crash on the rocks. They would then go down and loot the ships. And so I thought of a town that had once been famous for gold and then for pastoral industry. They were failing, and the town closed up. Then, with true pioneering spirit, according to the mayor, by tacit agreement the people set up a trap on the road into town where they would catch the cars, take them to town, and by night cannibalize them. It was just a simple little entertainment, a little allegory. It built up to where the young people of the town had grown up without the dual set of values of

the older people, who by day could be Dr. Jekyll and by night Mr. Hyde. These young people had simply grown up with this system of murder and had built their cars up into demolition derby vehicles and decorated them all like animals. They eventually get dissatisfied with their cut of the spare parts, and so they attack the town on the night of the Pioneer's Ball. There were a lot of jokes about certain attitudes, specifically "the end justifies the means." [The American distributor] obviously thought: "Here's a very good B-picture that's being messed up by this series of obscure jokes. We'll cut all that out." And they then reprinted a lot of my action sequences and dropped them around in other parts of the film. They were allowed in the contract, I think, to cut the film, always presumably to tighten it up. We were very new then, and the picture's pacing was never very good. It was far too slow in the wrong places and fast where it should have been slow. So we were quite happy to be taught by the Americans how to do this thing properly, not realizing that they would actually alter sequences and change things around and change the meaning of the film and re-voice a character, which was a breach of contract. We considered suing, but of course we had no money. So we just watched in horror. It was done with no intelligence whatsoever, and it damaged the only key commercial aspects the film ever had, I think. It was unpleasant to recall, actually.

It seemed that the townspeople were meant to have their own self-enclosed economy.

Look, it was made during the Vietnam War or shortly thereafter. There was a feeling that was really the central line pushed by the government of the day, which was that we must do these terrible things and can't admit that they are awful, these bombings, these whatevers. Because if we don't do them, then far worse killings and bombings will happen. In those days of the domino theory, they were coming down here, so we've got to go and whack them up there. We can't wait for them to actually invade us.

Did Australians literally fear invasion at that time?

Oh, yes. This is an ancient fear in Australia. We're the Europeans squatting down in Asia, and we're few in number, and there has been since the colonial times the fear that we could be put out. The Japanese nearly did do that (during World War II). Of course, these fears are always being twisted to the advantage of whoever's pushing some political line. "The Yellow Peril" was the phrase. But that also sounds like one sits down and illustrates some terrible sort of lecture. The reason I made the film was I was on holidays in France in 1971, travelling on a highway in the countryside, and I was diverted by some men in those day-glo jackets who had a little barrier across the road, who pointed to a side road. Which we took. And as we were driving along, I said to my wife, "Did you see what they were doing? There were no trucks, not even any shovels or anything. The road wasn't even out." And we agreed that, no, we'd been turned off by the sight of an orange jacket and a striped barricade. We didn't know where we were going. The road seemed to be going in the wrong direction, to be winding down. It was sort of like a bunch of pirates. Then I got to London a week or so later, and there on the front page was a huge story about a shotgun shooting. A man had been shot but wasn't dead. There were interviews with people, photographs of the scene, what have you. And down at the bottom was a tiny column saying there had been one of the highest tolls on the highways in England, twenty-five dead on their roads. So I thought, "Clearly, if you're going to kill someone, you do it with a car, you don't do it with a gun." That seemed to connect up with the French story. So I wrote a little short story about how the town worked out a way to get some extra income.

Why were there other writers on the screenplay?

◀ *Sanctuary in the sewers:* THE LAST WAVE

I always get them in if I'm having trouble with it. It was my story, my conception. But I couldn't get it right, so I brought in friends.

The Last Wave *was a similar situation?*

Yes. I write just to set a piece down. Then I call people in with special skills. I don't think there are any rules. For every instance like that, there's another where one person writes the thing. On *Picnic,* there was a novelist, Joan Lindsay, and a screenwriter, Cliff Green. As any director does, you rewrite and polish scenes, put interpretations on them, ask for rewrites. In that case, Cliff did a very good script, and I was very happy with it. So that was a nice, clean straightforward case. Who wants to have a lot of writers? You'd ideally like to have only one. In the case of *The Plumber,* I needed the money, couldn't afford to have anybody else.

In Picnic, *there is a clear contrast between European music and pipes. Did you start with the abstract idea of needing that kind of contrast, not necessarily knowing exactly what pieces you would use?*

No, no, it was purely emotional. I loved the Beethoven piece (the Fifth Piano Concerto), just personally loved it. And I think it was somewhere in my mind before the picture started that something of the feeling within the music was reflected in what I wanted to do in certain sequences. It was then found that it didn't help certain scenes. They needed something else. I believe in the known theory that you should attempt to make a film without music and then use music to do what you can't do visually. I work intuitively all the time and from the most simple sorts of approaches, really. Entertainment and stories. You get little clues that tell you what they mean, things that strike you about a sound or a piece of music. I do a lot of driving—I live out of town, about fifty minutes out—so I'm going into the city two or three times a week, and I play a lot of cassettes just to pass the time with music. I change the program every few weeks, but you get favorite passages of music that are full of ideas. And I don't quite know how I might use them, what the ideas are.

It's like a musical notebook, then.

Yes. Music To Be Excited By, Music To Move You, Miscellaneous Inexplicable Feelings Music.

Such things affect other people, too, in a way that might suggest precise calculation. As in Picnic: *starting with low storm sounds over shots of the rock. Then Miranda speaking the Edgar Allan Poe quotation: "What we are and what we seem are but a dream, a dream within a dream." Then a sudden rush of pipe music. All of this made me, for one, start vibrating: it had an instantaneous emotional effect. That may just mean that I am particularly susceptible to it . . .*

No, no. It's enormously exciting, what you can do. It's like the final stages of editing when we sit down with those sound effects. We played different kinds of music over the film. We had a composer working on it; he was coming up with all sorts of original themes. We were all getting a bit worried because time was running out. And Jim McElroy (one of the producers) heard that very piece on television, rang up, and said, "I've got it." And I said, "I don't believe you." But there it was. I

PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK ▶

think you can set up a mood where you can encourage such accidents to occur. I mean in a very pragmatic way. You can have the right type of crew. We're very fortunate in Australia, where they are friends still. They know that I ask them to contribute and set an atmosphere of great pleasure in making the film.

You followed the characters and the incidents in Joan Lindsay's novel very closely. But the tones of the book and the movie don't have very much in common. The book takes a more ironic, detached, amused view of the material. It does not have the movie's dreamlike, gossamer, gauzy feeling. How did that change come about and how deliberately?

I hadn't thought of this. It comes back sharply as you mention it. I was rather uneasy when Joan Lindsay, who is a charming woman in her seventies now, went to see the film. Quite clearly, she was a bit shocked by it. Far too polite to say so to me, exactly. But later I did pin her down about it. By that time, I think, she had had so many letters of congratulations from friends and so on—the thing was an instant hit—that she put aside her own reservations. But they were considerable, and she did say something to me like, "You've changed the tone." And I said, "Did that upset you? It's perhaps rather natural that this would happen." And she said, "Well, I was a little surprised. I didn't write it with that kind of feeling."

You didn't make a conscious decision to change the tone?

No. When I put the book down, having read it in one sitting during a long night, I saw it that way instantly. It wasn't something that developed later.

For instance, both novel and movie show the girls preparing for the picnic. But the book has no equivalent for the feeling of the film scene, when they are all in a room together lacing their corsets, that whole rapt atmosphere.

A lot of that, I think, came with the girls themselves. I think that scene was scripted: "Scenes of the girls preparing to go on the picnic," a very slight montage. But those girls were so carefully chosen. Roughly, we saw five hundred girls in three states. I was looking for girls who within themselves reflected the qualities of the touring young lady. I had studied very carefully photographs of people from around the turn of the century, and there was something different in the face. They were heavier and rounder faces, and they had a certain calm. Above all, a calm and an openness in their look to the camera when their photograph was taken in 1900.

Are they professional actresses?

Three of them were, the three principals who disappear. But they had very, very slight experience. The other girls were schoolkids, mostly from South Australia. When they were all brought together and had their costume fittings, they gave off a tremendous atmosphere.

There is a powerful aura from just seeing them together. They look fluffy and white and lighter than air, like fantasy figures.

They were just like that. And they had a curious effect on the crew, who were a pretty tough old bunch of Aussie brigands. Everybody became more genteel and more polite. I remember fairly heavyweight groups saying things like, "Excuse me, can I get *pahst* you there? I'm just carrying this light over." And if somebody ever used bad language on the set, eight or nine heads turned. I was playing a lot of music on the set and building this atmosphere. And we were in beautiful locations. It was a golden summer.

I recall one shot where a girl enters the frame from the top in slow motion, making her dress hem bounce as she lands and walks. Such effects can be moving in the way that musical effects are.

I constantly altered the speed of my camera in both *Picnic* and *The Last Wave*. Sometimes you can see it in *Picnic;* you don't much in *The Last Wave*. But I'd do a shot, and one question from the camera crew is what speed to film it. I have not really studied carefully what effect is has.

It's almost like creating a sense of trance, both for the characters and the audience. We move into a dream world, as the characters do.

It's a very interesting effect in a conversation sometimes, just to shoot the conversation at the 24-frame speed and then shoot one of the characters, as I did with Richard Chamberlain a couple of times, at 120-frames-a-second, just his reactions, and then cut that into the dialogue conversation. You would obviously ask the character not to blink or move.

I had assumed, from reading the novel and from the title at the beginning of the film, that the basic event really happened. That on Valentine's day in

1900 these girls went on a picnic, three of them and a teacher disappeared then one was rescued but couldn't remember anything. And that it was equally true that no "solution" was ever found. Is it documented that they actually got lost this way?

No. No, there's no documentary evidence whatsoever. We can't even determine whether the girls ever disappeared. Joan Lindsay introduces her book with a similar quote, although hers is not quite as direct as that. She says, "Whether what follows is true or false hardly seems to matter, as all those involved are long since dead." I was warned when I went to meet her—she had approval of the director—not to ask her about the truth or non-truth of the matter. I asked her—I did ask her—first off, "Is it true?" And she said, "I hope you'll never ask me about that again."

I thought that her note meant we can never determine their fates. Did they fall into a crevasse? Did wild animals eat them? Did they run away and hide somewhere?

No, no.

So Joan Lindsay might have made the whole story up?

Oh, no. I don't think so.

Then she may know things that she just isn't going to tell?

She does, without question. She suddenly sat down and poured that out. She said she was possessed to put this story down. Wrote it over a period of ten days, in fact. Everything is real. All the characters clearly lived.

I just thought it might be possible to examine newspapers of the period and find stories about "Girls Lost . . ."

Journalists did. Journalists went mad about it. No. Of course, ever since the country was settled, there have been stories of people disappearing, to this very day. I think that quite likely she is referring to a true incident, not exactly as described. I mean, these were enormously powerful people. In colonial times, they could have hushed anything up.

Parents of girls, local authorities?

Yes. I never worried too much about it. Frankly, it suited me. I think people disappear for a variety of reasons, including falling down holes. I liked the idea of there being no solution, as there isn't to most things.

Any solution would have been disappointing.

Yes. We took the title on, and we took it off. We finally decided to put it on for a different reason. Which was that, if we didn't put it on, it might have the effect of looking like just a con mystery without any solution. The mystery, in fact, increases with the lack of knowlege of what really did happen. When the film came out and the press were ringing Lady Lindsay—she was getting odd notes and psychics and all the usual sort of carryon that you get with a film like this—she said to me, "The press are really pestering me about the truth of the matter, and in fact there are no newspaper records. Do you think I should tell them what happened?" And I said, "No, no, not at all. I think your secret should go with you." Whatever that secret was. That it was a hoax I doubt, frankly.

As in novels like Ragtime *real and fictional things are mixed.*

I think that's quite reasonable. It's somewhat the way I see things anyway. I don't believe things because they're in the newspaper or disbelieve them because they're not. I myself have no television, no newspapers. I have a radio. I listen to it occasionally. But I don't have any real interest in any of it. But you do pick everything up anyway. The village system still works. There's so much media in the air. The only things you manage to filter out are the things you really don't need to know, like a bus accident in Guatemala or children trapped in a lift shaft in Western Australia. Why know about them? There's nothing you can do. At one stage I worked at the Commonwealth Film Unit, Film Australia, where the main work we did was make documentaries. And the very word documentary used to make me laugh when I'd see some of my friends or myself cutting away, totally editorializing in the way we put the picture togeher.

Your films seem especially dreamlike. And they communicate a sense that we live on a thin crust, beneath which are hellish, disruptive forces which are not necessarily, or not totally, the products of a particular social system.

Well, you can think how many times the cinema itself has been described as the closest thing to dreaming. I always find it slightly embarrassing when you do point out themes like that in a film. I mean, I can see them quite clearly, those sorts

of imagery, because they occur quite spontaneously, naturally. I didn't construct that as a sort of theory.

It might be a matter of, for example, looking out this window at all of that [*a daytime Los Angeles cityscape*]. *In one way it's all very substantial. In another, it can feel like a mirage.*

Yes, but I think in a very, very basic way. I think I just get jumpy. I'm very easily frightened, really. I don't know why.

For instance, a local critic (Michael Sragow, of the Los Angeles Herald Examiner*) wrote that your films suggest that you might view life as if through a fetal sac. He meant that as a criticism, but it could be taken favorably as well.*

(laughter) What an interesting thought . . . I don't look at life in any particular way. I've never thought of it like that. I don't really have views on things. I really look at life in a series of close-ups: breakfast, the weather this morning, swimming . . . There appears to be a gap between my daily life and making the movies. Appears to be. I just don't seem to see that connection between the two. The way you see things, you see a body of films coming out, you can see these connections, and that is part of the interest of *your* work. But, as occurs with many film-makers, there is a large gap, unless you are a visionary who in a sense lives only film. Well, I don't. It's not my way of doing it. I'm not a film buff. But when you've come across a subject that inspires, which has been my good fortune fairly regularly, you then search for the style and the elements that most appropriately realize that idea or that inspiration. And it's a great battle, too, I think. I remember Eisenstein putting it far better than this: trying to remain faithful to that original inspiration through all the technical processes, the passage of time, the ups and downs of one's own life, whatever.

It's not a case of literally filming your own dreams?

Not at all, no. Also, to answer the question a little more fairly, I have lost interest in certain themes. There was a period when I read a tremendous amount of Carl Jung. I was dazzled, overwhelmed. And, hell, I read very little of it now, nor do I either agree with or understand all of his theories. This film we're working on, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, has moved in another direction. It's about a very real situation, but in an extraordinarily hallucinatory setting. The film is entirely set in Java during the mid-sixties. Anyone who has travelled in the East, particularly anywhere in Indonesia, will find that it is extremely disorienting, that particular ambiance and culture.

The Year of Living Dangerously *concerns foreigners in a city that's falling apart? (reading from the cover of the novel, by C.J. Koch: "Jakarta 1965 . . . the fall of Sukarno . . . strange three-way relationship between successful correspondent Guy Hamilton, his extraordinary Chinese-American cameraman Billy Kwan, and the woman they both love . . .)*

It's a long distance cousin of *Casablanca* and *The Third Man*. *The Year of Living Dangerously* is the name that Sukarno gave to that year. He gave every year a name. This was, in fact, Sukarno's last year. So the title also has a delicious reference to the affair which the two central characters have: a very typical and tough foreign correspondent in the Hamilton part and a girl who works at the British embassy, a little older than he but also a pretty tough character in her own way. They've lived, travelled, and here they are in this extraordinarily exotic setting with the whole regime coming down around them.

I hope I'm not coming down too hard on this. But this project sounds like another situation involving stable people whose stability is blown apart. And often the blowing apart is connected with "primitive" people and settings. Or, as in The Plumber, *a working class man disrupting intellectuals. Some critics in this country accuse you of romanticizing primitive people—aborigines, working-class people, whoever—and caricaturing "civilized" people, intellectuals, by making them bloodless, sexless. What do you think about this?*

Well, if you make films with a strong style and with a strong sort of hand, inevitably you will create strong reactions for and against. I would say to those sorts of criticisms, "Oh, really?" I mean, I have no interest in intellectuals, bloodless or otherwise. I have no interest in primitive peoples, one way or the other. I'm interested in stories. I'm interested in the details that I come across.

In The Last Wave, *someone must have thought of this matter given the moment when a supporting character denounces the hero for suddenly acquiring a sentimental, patronizing interest in aborigines.*

Ah, yes. I wasn't unaware of it. I remember rewriting that scene to drop that line in, because

I had already picked up some of that criticism from some people who had read the script. But I'm probably just more interested in events, in catastrophic events, like death or revolution. I'm not really interested in the day-to-day life. I admire people who can construct films out of minutiae. Look at Woody Allen. I'm just dazzled by the way he can put a film together out of seemingly, too few incidents, major character interactions and difficulties. But I wouldn't know what to do with that myself. I honestly can't answer those criticisms of my films. I'm just not interested enough. I can't try and fit in with some sort of system.

ANDREW HORTON

Film from Appalshop:

DOCUMENTARY FILM-MAKERS IN THE APPALACHIANS

"I don't put nothin' in or take nothin' out," comments Walter Winebarger, a fifth-generation owner of a waterpowered gristmill near Boone, North Carolina, about the pure quality of his flour. He and his mill are the subject of *Waterground*, a 16-minute color documentary (1977). It was produced by local Appalachian film-makers attached to a non-profit folk arts cooperative, operating in the coal mining area of eastern Kentucky, which calls itself Appalshop. In many ways Winebarger's remark is an apt summary of the simplicity and integrity of the 30 documentaries that have been made by this group of self-taught Appalachian film-makers: they don't put in "nothin' " fancy in terms of technique and they take "nothin' out" from their documents of Appalachian history, culture, and contemporary social issues.

Started in 1969 as a project under the joint aid of the Office of Economic Opportunity and the American Film Institute to train minorities (hillbillies!) for film and television careers, Appalshop has expanded to become an umbrella for a variety of interests including Roadside Theater, a record division (June Appal Recordings), a quarterly review of mountain area literature and art *(Mountain Review)*, and a still-photography workshop. While OEO and AFI funding ceased in 1971, the cooperative has continued to function, with about 50 per cent of its income earned by film distribution, record and magazine sales, and theater performances; the remainder has come from private donations and grants from the National Endowments for the Humanities and the Arts.

The documentary film-making division, however, remains an important part of the group. And an unusual outfit it is, made up of young people who have taught themselves the basics of film-making in order to record a way of life that is fast vanishing around them. Dudley Cocke, who has been with Appalshop for three years and has co-written their successful play *Red Fox/Second Hangin'*, explains that many of the film-makers were local high-school students or recent graduates who joined the project "for fun" and became hooked. Some have gone on to work in television and film on a national level, though most have remained in the Whitesburg, Kentucky area.

How does such a flexible cooperative hold itself together? Appalshop is run by a "core" board made up of members. People are elected to the board, usually after having been at Appalshop a year and showing a commitment to the region and the Appalshop concept. Terms do not expire. At monthly meetings the board decides which film, drama, recording and photography projects to support and how much funding should go to each proposal. There are 20 board members, and about 35 people working full- or part-time—13 of them in film-making and film distribution projects. The group is open to anyone interested in Appalshop

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Appalshopper Rick DiClemente, a West Virginia native, filming CHAIRMAKER *with Dewey Thompson at his Eastern Kentucky home.*

film-making activities. The atmosphere at Appalshop, Cocke says, is a generally happy blend of creative excitement and hard work. The fact that they celebrated their first decade in 1979 is proof enough that the organization is a vibrant community-based media and arts group.

There is nothing complicated about most of the films Appalshop has produced. *Woodrow Cornett: Letcher County Butcher,* the workshop's first film, by Bill Richardson and Frank Majority (1970, B&W, 10 minutes) is typical. The film simply follows this country butcher as he goes about the everyday business of killing, preparing, and curing hogs. Frank Majority (who is Woodrow's son-in-law) narrates as Woodrow works; harmonica tunes are interspersed as a connecting motif between scenes. The result is a close matching of technique and subject matter. The matter-of-fact manner in which Majority explains the butcher's work is recorded by a matter-of-fact camera which simply shows Woodrow Cornett at work. The effect of the film, however, is powerful because Cornett's occupation strikes the urbanized viewer as unusual or brutal. The hog is shot in the head, slit across the throat and hung until its blood has drained out. When these films were shown at the Manhattan Theatre Club many in the audience closed their eyes or turned their heads. A woman next to me exclaimed that because of the "cruelty" of the film she would no longer eat meat. But such a reaction suggests more about our squeamishness than the nature of the film. For clearly *Woodrow Cornett* is not a "protest" film: it is rather an unblinking look at a traditional mountain occupation.

The importance of the Appalshop approach to documentary is that it allows the subject matter to speak for itself with a minimum of interference from the film-maker. Yet the Appalshop documentaries are not neutral or scientifically objective. On the contrary, the choice of subjects is an editorial comment that the Appalachian way of life has for centuries contained its own folk culture and wisdom, which are now threatened with extinction. Thus the simplicity and purity of the films is a direct extension of Appalachian culture. However, like the *Foxfire* books, Appalshop films have an appeal far beyond that culture.

Nature's Way (1974, 22 min., color), a first film by John Long, includes portraits of a black man selling folk medicines and cures at a fair, an elderly woman making her own salve, a man blending a cancer cure he learned from an old Indian, and a midwife delivering twins. As in *Woodrow Cornett* the camera simply records each individual describing the activity he or she is involved in. The final section, of course, is the most remarkable (the birth sequence was filmed by Elizabeth Barret, her first camera experience, because only women were allowed at the delivery). The midwife is Lena Stephens, a spry, thin old lady whose simultaneous narration tells us as much if not more about her work as does the film itself. Her voice is calm, good-natured and touched with humor. The fact that she can talk at all as she reassuringly executes her duties is proof of her quiet professionalism. Just before the first twin emerges she tells us:

> They come and see me, an' talk with me . . . and I check 'em and then I'm not worried about 'em when they get in labor. Sometimes give her an asprin if she'll take 'em. Some don't need anything. Let 'em walk around, do as they please 'til their pains get hard and then they go to bed. Some of them, they ain't in the bed ten minutes 'til they have 'em, and some just barely gets in the bed, and some has 'em before they get in the bed. Some has 'em in their trucks and cars.
>
> Two year ago I [had] delivered 5,204 and I've not counted the record since. I've went and waited on 'em so long an' lose so much sleep, I'd think I never could make it. I've had to park along the road an' sleep a while before I could drive home. I delivered six one night. *That's the most* I ever delivered.

Again, the matter-of-fact tone in which she speaks about such an unusual career holds our attention. But her speech is only a prelude to the on-camera delivery of twins as she works swiftly but carefully, constantly soothing the anxious mother. Birth, which has been made mysterious for most of us because of its removal to clinics and hospitals, is shown to be a natural at-home experience for many Appalachian people who still employ the services of their local midwife.

Unlike the more refined—but inevitably more manipulative—styles of documentaries made with theater distribution or TV broadcast in mind, the Appalshop approach allows the people to speak for themselves without the intrusion of complex technique or the dramatic withholding-then-revealing of details. Appalshop puts us in direct contact with a series of individuals who share their lives on film. Thus in its own quiet way, Appalshop has developed a "revolutionary" alternative to commercial or documentary film-making. Instead of network TV crews covering local topics from the outside (think of Charles Kuralt's "On the Road" reports, for instance), Appalshop suggests how minority groups can speak for themselves. And instead of the voice-over narrations typical of so many commercial documentaries, these Appalachian films focus on mountain folk who express themselves in the tone, rhythm and manner they are accustomed to, as if the camera were a neighbor who happened by to chat on the front porch. Appalshop is not merely providing a service that could be classified as visual anthropology or sociology; it is also helping to shape an identity, a sense of place and history that has otherwise been largely eroded by a dominant American culture.

Appalshop film-makers do sometimes experiment with more complex forms of documentary that go beyond individual portraits. *The Buffalo Creek Flood: An Act of Man* (1975, 40 min., B & W), directed and edited by Mimi Pickering, a Californian who now lives in Kentucky, is their most ambitious project to date. *The Buffalo Creek Flood* is, like *Harlan County USA*, a thesis film, an angry film, a work that sets out to expose the negligence of the Pittston Coal Company which led to death and destruction in Logan County, West Virginia. The film includes interviews with survivors, mine union officials, company administrators, and citizens' groups, as well as scenes of the flood itself, which was caused when the

Midwife Lena Stephens with Lora Reynolds and her twins: NATURE'S WAY ▶

Buffalo Creek dam broke—killing 124 people and leaving 4,000 homeless. The film record presents unquestionable evidence that this disaster, which was labeled "an act of God" by the mining officials, was clearly "an act of man."

Appalshop used a variety of sources for this film. Shots of the flood were taken in Super-8 by a resident of Buffalo Creek. A West Virginia friend shot footage of the destruction the day after the flood. Interviews with survivors were made on video tape. And still photographers throughout the area contributed their photos to the project.

There are rough edges to the film when compared to a more ambitious work such as *Harlan County USA*. The switch from film to video is often poor, the titles are unclear, and the editing could have been tighter to intensify the focus and emotion of the film. But these are minor faults when compared to the overall movement and effect of the documentary. Two years before *Harlan County USA*, this film experimented successfully with blending narration, interviews, documentary footage and folk music into one effort to portray the cause and effect of a man-made (company-made) disaster. And the film is admirable for its ability to strike a balance between emotion and analysis. Interviews with Thomas Bethell, Research Director of the United Mine Workers of America, provide the statistical information needed: we learn, for instance, that the Pittston Company, which built and owned the dam, was second in the country "both in terms of fatal (accident) frequency and non-fatal frequency." In 1971 alone, the year before the flood, Pittston had been charged by federal inspectors with over 5,000 safety violations; all were challenged by the company, with the result that they paid about $275 in fines. The interviews with survivors convey the pathos of the tragedy in human terms. Between emotion and statistic is the topical folk ballad about the flood written by Doug and Ruth Yarrow and set to Woody Guthrie's tune, "1913 Massacre." The chorus that is repeated several times is:

How could it happen? How could it be?
That dam it belonged to the coal company.
An "act of God" the bosses did cry,
But God ain't that cruel,
We can see through your lie.

The Buffalo Creek Flood speaks to us on the human level of universal loss and suffering. But it is also a political film that reflects the decades of abuse and frustration experienced by the miners and their families. Exploited by the companies and largely ignored by the federal government, the miners have become, as the film shows, victims above the ground as well as below. One survivor sums up the untold destruction (the mining company settled out of court with the survivors for $13,000,000 on what was considered to be at least $50,000,000 worth of damage) at the end of the film—after we have learned that dams similar to the Buffalo Creek Dam still exist in West Virginia. In the same matter-of-fact voice so familiar in the portrait documentaries, an old lady says:

> I didn't see God a-drivin' them slate trucks up there and wearin' a hard-hulled cap. I didn't see that at no time when I visited the dam. That's the way I feel about it. I don't believe it was an "act of God"; it was an "act of man."

And so it was. Our sympathies are with her for her ability to express the truth and with the Appalshop film-makers for bringing it to us through the medium of film.

NOTE: Appalshop films have appeared occasionally on public television. They may be rented or bought directly from the workshop. For information contact: Appalshop Inc., Box 743, Whitesburg, Kentucky 41858. Telephone: (606) 633-5708.

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

Film Quarterly has been publishing continuously since 1958, and many early back issues are out-of-print; these are available only secondhand or in reprint form from A. M. S. Press, Inc., 56 East 13th St., New York NY 10003. Microfilm copies are also available, from University Microfilms Inc., 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48101. However, most issues from 1965 onward are still in print. They are available postpaid at $1.75 for individuals and $3.00 for institutions. Send check with order to: Periodicals Department, University of California Press, Berkeley 94720.

Reviews

WISE BLOOD

Directed by John Huston. Produced by Michael & Kathy Fitzgerald. Screenplay by Benedict Fitzgerald, from the novel by Flannery O'Connor. Photography by Gerald Fisher. Edited by Roberto Silvi. New Line Cinema.

Hazel Motes is driving down the road in his $225 car when he is pulled over to the side by a policeman. He asks why and the officer responds, "I just don't like your face." After telling him to get out, the cop gives the car a shove, sending it down the embankment, across a field, and into a lake.

John Huston's *Wise Blood,* adapted from Flannery O'Connor's first novel, is a brilliant mixture of painfully lucid and tantalizingly inexplicable elements. The scene I have just recounted is perhaps the best example of how these two elements are put into play within the same structure. Taken out of context, the sequence might seem like another Kafka-esque evocation of the American South, with paranoia as its leading element. Such is not the case in *Wise Blood.* In the first place, the scene may be read within both parenthetical and causal frameworks. Huston plays with his audience's predilection for relating one sequence to another, whether through temporal or compositional connections. Preceding the scene on the road was one which took place the previous night, in which Hazel had run over and killed a bogus preacher who had been "created" to mirror him. Thus, when the cop pulls Hazel off the road, the viewer tends to assume it has something to do with the murder. When the cop's intentions are known, the scene becomes even more "inexplicable."

On the other hand, when viewed in retrospect, the scene has clear connotations for the remainder of the film. Hazel's car was extremely important to him, as it represented an alternative to the confines of the city. Whether he took advantage of it or not was less important than the fact that he had it in his possession. Earlier in the film, in the midst

Easy teen-ager, "blind" preacher, and Hazel the desperate unbeliever: WISE BLOOD

of one of his evangelical outbursts, he says, somewhat obliquely, "Nobody with a good car needs to be justified!" Following the loss of his car, Hazel changes, descending into a pit of masochistic fury. Just as the relationship between crime and punishment is denied in the first reading (expected arrest) so the sinking of the car in the water implies a parallel relationship with Hazel's descent into purgatory. Just as a narrative fractured in time may be pieced together at its conclusion, so *Wise Blood* may be re-examined by way of its "obscure" elements being illuminated by seemingly disparate events.

After getting out of the army and returning home, Hazel Motes decides to become a preacher. Yet his church is different from those of all the other street corner Salvationists. His is the Church Without Christ, a place where redemption is not promised because there is no need for it in the first place. "I'm a member and preacher to that church where the blind don't see and the lame don't walk and what's dead stays that way." While others collect payments in lieu of future security, Hazel's emphasis is firmly on the present, devoid of debts to pay or promises to keep.

Although O'Connor's novel is intricately concerned with guilt and how it can be sold and assimilated like dimestore candy on the streets, it is primarily comic in tone, relying on an obsessional black humor of the odd ineluctability of events. *Wise Blood* is an ironic tale of believing and not believing and how each, when taken to the precipice, results in the same type of constriction.

To translate this story to the screen requires a certain amount of detachment, an ability to distance the events from each other while indicating their potential connections. John Huston, of course, is a master of ironic detachment. From *The Maltese Falcon* to *The Asphalt Jungle* to *Fat City* he has dealt with characters battling absurd and insurmountable odds. While the audience perceives this hopelessness, the fictional characters do not. Paradoxically, it is because we are removed from the characters that we are able to see their situation clearly and thus are able to identify with them. The same is true in *Wise Blood* as we watch Hazel struggle in vain against the legacies of his past and the whole religious background of the South.

When discussing a novel-turned-film, the inevitable question is whether the film is "faithful" to the novel or not. Although the question is basically empty—ignoring the unique signifying devices of each art in favor of "content"—it may be instructive to note the frequent intersections of intentions between Huston and O'Connor, especially in matters of tone, with each work developing the reverberative qualities of word or image. There is a literal quality to the film in each shot, each sequence; yet there is always some mystery, some obscure crazedness, behind Huston's crystalline images.

From Brad Dourif as Hazel to Harry Dean Stanton as Asa Hawks, the "blind" preacher whose presence magnetizes Hazel, to Daniel Shor as Enoch Emory, the boy with the "wise blood" getting ready to "do something," the acting is extraordinary—a perfectly modulated mix of understated emotion alternating with uncontrolled intensity. Dourif, in particular, is the physical embodiment of the character described by O'Connor as having a face with "a fragile look as if it might have been broken and stuck together again, or like a gun no one knows is loaded." As Hazel slinks through the frame, often boxed out of his surroundings by the camera, he seems to be constantly hunched over, his black hat silhouetted against the frighteningly clear Southern sky. Finally, his gaze—"His eyes . . . don't look like they see what they're looking at, but they keep on looking"—balances off of that hat's rim, emphasizing the linearity in his expression and figure.

This conciseness of character through elements of typage and performance operates in all the film's personages. Take Hoover Shoates, the hustler who wants to become Hazel's "manager" when he detects a financial glimmer around the Church Without Christ. As O'Connor described him, "He was not handsome, but under his smile was an honest look that fitted into his face like a set of false teeth." This sentence, cutting straight to the bone, is transposed to the screen through Ned Beatty, the perfect con man who suggests both a heart of gold and a devious streak of self-serving determination. Beatty's red checks reflect the boy through the man who is perpetually out of breath.

If the performances create an unnerving tension between sincerity and deceit, frailty and steadfast determination, the film's compositions accomplish a similar effect with the landscape. For example, the way in which the tenements and the

boarding houses seem to float in the ether above the metropolis, visually separating the two social levels; the alternation of night and day scenes, such as the "matched" scenes of Hazel preaching from his car with a "Jesus Cares" neon sign in the background, where the morning light becomes more blinding and the electric lights of night more surreal by virtue of the comparison; the use of reflection, e.g., sun careening off cars, figures superimposed in storefront windows as they walk down Main Street, etc. Each shot reveals a starkness of composition and light that is tempered by the luminosity of the characters passing through.

Wise Blood is a successful film because it is able to transform the novel into its own unique, albeit sympathetic, terms. It is Huston's best work since *Fat City*, combining that film's clarity of vision with the effortless strokes of *The Man Who Would Be King*. Like the vast majority of Huston's films, it is a smile tempered by recognition. As the camera pulls back in the film's last shot, placing Hazel within the perspective of his ascetic surroundings, there is a sense of finality to the scene, a summation of events past. Yet, at the same time, all of those events are opened up and the process of "reading" begins again.

—MICHAEL TARANTINO

THE PLUMBER

Director: Peter Weir. Producer: Matt Carroll. Photography: David Sanderson. Editor: G. Turney-Smith.

Peter Weir's latest film *The Plumber* (1978), which recently premièred at Filmex, surprised many viewers who were expecting another mystical, visually lush film like *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975) and *The Last Wave* (1977). Instead, they saw a 76-minute Pinteresque black comedy, which at times is hysterically funny and at other times emotionally disturbing. "The festival context is very difficult for a film like this, which was originally made for Australian television," said Peter Weir, when I spoke with him in Los Angeles. *The Plumber* is his first feature that he not only directed, but also wrote entirely by himself. He claims that he really didn't want to write it himeslf, but needed the money: "A project I was working on fell through, and I realized I was in for a year without work, so I didn't want to split the fee with a writer." The film was inexpensive and was shot in only three weeks so, according to Weir, "there was really no time for anyone else to get involved. It was an extremely simple piece."

Despite these limitations, *The Plumber* is in some ways a more perfectly realized work than Weir's earlier, more ambitious films. It focuses on a power struggle between a woman and a man. Jill Cowper is an M.A. candidate in anthropology, who lives in a university apartment complex with her husband, a medical researcher working on nutrition. Like the typical situation in a Pinter play,[1] one day when she is home alone a mysterious stranger unexpectedly comes to her door; eventually he disrupts her life and challenges her identity. The visitor is Max, a plumber who claims to work for the university complex. Though she and her husband did not call for a plumber, Max claims to have come to prevent an incipient catastrophe. He actually succeeds in bullying her both psychically and sexually. He violates her privacy and transforms her serene bathroom into a precarious jungle of tangled pipes; he interrupts her work with his noisy radio and his improvised imitations of Bob Dylan; he frightens her with wild stories, which may or may not be true, about having served time in prison for rape. Yet he is engagingly warm and humorous and is perceived by everyone else—including her husband, her friend Meg, and the manager of the apartment building—as a real charmer. She grows increasingly isolated and unsure of her perception of the situation. Totally involved in the visitation of an international team of scientists to his research lab Jill's husband Brian is completely oblivious to his wife's ordeal. The brilliance of the film lies in taking this stock situation from domestic comedy, which would be farcical in the context of an *I Love Lucy* show, and transforming it into a desperate struggle for sanity and survival. Eventually, when Jill is close to a nervous breakdown, she frames Max for robbery and sends him to prison. Weir says of this struggle: "I was interested in the two people finding the 'bad seed' in each other, and making their own Frankenstein monsters. It's a fatal encounter."

Weir is convinced that the casting of the two leading roles was essential to making the ambiguity work. Judy Morris, who plays Jill, combines a subtle shyness with a quiet strength of will. Weir

boarding houses seem to float in the ether above the metropolis, visually separating the two social levels; the alternation of night and day scenes, such as the "matched" scenes of Hazel preaching from his car with a "Jesus Cares" neon sign in the background, where the morning light becomes more blinding and the electric lights of night more surreal by virtue of the comparison; the use of reflection, e.g., sun careening off cars, figures superimposed in storefront windows as they walk down Main Street, etc. Each shot reveals a starkness of composition and light that is tempered by the luminosity of the characters passing through.

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Weir is convinced that the casting of the two leading roles was essential to making the ambiguity work. Judy Morris, who plays Jill, combines a subtle shyness with a quiet strength of will. Weir

claims she brought these qualities to the role. It is her hesitancy that enables Max to take over her apartment, and her relentless determination that enables her to get him out of the house—even if it means bearing false witness to send him to prison. Yet at the end of the story, we are not really sure whether we should interpret her deceptive move as a strong decisive victory or as a desperate moral defeat.

The same kind of ambiguity is cultivated by Ivar Kants, who plays Max. Weir said that Kants had originally come to test for the role of the husband (played by Robert Coleby). At the end of the interview, Kants said he also loved the plumber's part. Although Weir already had several good tests for Max's role, those actors were merely able to terrify the woman—none of them was able to capture the plumber's charm or his warmth. Weir saw Ivar Kants as basically a "good person" in the old fashioned sense: "It came across in his smile, in his cheery grin." Weir thinks this quality made the ambiguity work.

Of course, some viewers don't see the ambiguity, but merely have a simplistic reaction that confirms their own prejudices. When he was dubbing the film, the projectionist told Weir: "God, I know that type of woman—the stuck-up bitch! She deserves everything she gets!" Yet women have been strong supporters of the film, responding to it in exactly the opposite way. After it was aired on Australian television, Judy Morris received many letters from women who reported similar incidents happening to them and who saw her as clearly victorious in the end.

Weir should not be blamed for trying to have it both ways; the ambiguity in the story greatly enriches its meaning. He consciously cultivates the reading of this encounter on many different levels —not merely as a sexual struggle between a swaggering macho bully and a timid, uptight woman, but also as a class struggle between the underprivileged working class and the snobbish, educated bourgeoisie; between the instinctive world of sexuality, improvisation, and charm and the academic world of reason, science and law; between the sixties counter culture that spawned underground rock stars and rebels and the seventies establishment that pursues world progress and personal advancement. Unlike Wertmüller's *Swept Away* which also pits a bourgeois bitch against a proletarian bully, *The Plumber* avoids the sexism in this equation. One might be more sympathetic to the man's social position, but his personal behavior is far more objectionable than that of his female opponent. Weir admits: "It's not really an equal duel—he was more dangerous; her neurotic reaction was in some ways appropriate."

Perhaps even more important, the movie suggests that both characters are victims of the class system and the established society. Despite her privileged status as a graduate student, Jill's role as a woman and as a housewife renders her powerless and vulnerable to male manipulation, not only from the obnoxious plumber, but also from her husband who assumes his career is far more important than her mental health. The only way that she can persuade anyone that the plumber is endangering her life is to prove that he poses a threat to private property—by accusing him of stealing money and the expensive watch that her husband gave her. Although Max is clearly innocent of these crimes, ironically he is guilty of far more dangerous attacks on her sanity. But these violations are not defined as crimes by the society. In order to survive the threat he poses, she herself has to commit a crime. That is the only way she can win the attention, sympathy and support of her husband, the university, and the law.

In some ways the confrontation between Jill and Max is analogous to the encounter between the lawyer and the aboriginal shaman in *The Last Wave*. Both plots involve a clash between two cultures. In *The Plumber* this connection is underscored by an inset story told by Jill to her husband very early in the film. When she was doing field work in New Guinea, she had a strange encounter with a shaman who went into a trance and held her there immobile, in a small hut, for several hours. Finally she realized that she was imprisoned in his ritual, that the situation was desperate, and that she had to act. Rousing herself from her characteristic passivity, she instinctively grabbed a bowl of goat's milk and threw it in the shaman's face. Humiliated and defeated, he wept in anguish. Intrigued with the story, Brian advises Jill to include it in her thesis—it would make the book more appealing to a wider audience. One can't help take this remark self-reflexively as a statement

about Weir's own narrative strategy; but he chooses not to dramatize the event in a flashback and keeps his camera restricted to the university complex. Yet at certain moments throughout the film, the camera dwells on a photograph of this shaman and Jill intermittently plays musical tapes from his culture. These visual and audio cues lead us to see this earlier encounter as the "germinal seed" that controls Jill's reactions to the plumber and to reinterpret her interaction with Max in this ethnographic context. In both cases, Jill is confronting a powerful male who imposes his psychic reality and forces her into a passivity that threatens her identity; in both cases, she intuitively discovers a way to humiliate and defeat the man within his own male-dominated cultural context.

These two encounters are based on actual incidents that happened to a close friend of Weir's—an anthropologist who is married to a doctor. They were Australians living in London in the same kind of university complex as portrayed in the film. A plumber bullied her in a subtle way, causing the subtle relation between her and her husband to quickly collapse into the sexist cliché. Weir added the dramatic turn of events in the story, but retained the basic characterizations. The encounter with the shaman had happened to the same woman some years earlier; it was Weir's idea to put the two incidents together. In telling the earlier story, Weir made some very significant omissions.

> I didn't put in that the man, the shaman, had an erection. It was like a display—a sexual display. The anthropologist with all of her education and degrees suddenly was frightened—frightened of rape. So she threw the goat's milk in his face and this humiliated him. In fact, he was so humiliated that he defecated on the floor.

There is a chain of scatalogical associations between the shaman's defecation (a detail omitted from the film), Max's low prestige job as a plumber (which directly involved him with the apparatus by which civilized man disguises his most humiliating biological function), and the sewer works in *The Last Wave*, which is chosen as sacred grounds by the aborigines because they know it's the only wasteland that western civilization will avoid at all costs. As Rabelais and Swift have so powerfully proved, scatalogical imagery, particularly when humorous, can be extremely subversive. This subversive potential is fully realized in the most hilarious sequence of *The Plumber*. In the midst of her plumbing battles, Jill is manipulated by her husband into cooking a curry dinner for two of his distinguished academic visitors, an Indian and an African, who have come to evaluate his research in nutrition and who will decide whether he is offered a prestigious year in Geneva. At first the dinner goes surprisingly well—even though Jill has never before made her "famous" curry for a *real* Indian, and even though the African finds it too darn hot. Somehow Jill has managed to get the whole soirée together—an elegant meal, her own glamorous appearance, and a tidy apartment. The reality of her previous ordeal with the plumber disappears like a nightmare. That is, until one of their guests, the Indian, has to use the bathroom. The civilized ritual of the dinner party is suddenly transformed back into the basic biological process, which, as Buñuel so wittily reminded us in *Phantom of Liberty*, has two ends. Once he enters the john, the visitor is confronted with a comical labyrinth of pipes. Although he cleverly manages to relieve himself, he is not so successful in the hand-cleansing ritual, for the wash basin falls on top of him, toppling the makeshift superstructure of pipes, blocking the door, and creating a minor disaster. Instead of ruining the evening, this comical accident actually deflates the pomposity of the social rituals and humanizes hosts and guests. It works in everyone's favor—cinching Brian's invitation to Geneva, making Jill's bogeyman look benign, and dispelling the audience's nervous tension with laughter. Even the disturbing story of the shaman's humiliation now seems comical from this farcical perspective. A similar effect is achieved by a later restaurant scene, in which Jill and Brian

Ivar Kants and Judy Morris in THE PLUMBER

celebrate the invitation to Geneva with a good meal and lively music. But just at the point when the Cowpers and we in the audience become too smug, the nightmare recurs with a vengeance. The pipes explode, sending a tidal wave of excremental waters through the apartment—an event that justifies the triumphant return of Max (though it is not clear whether he correctly prophesied or caused this catastrophe) and pushes Jill to the breaking point. This time the humiliating disaster is not pure farce.

When examined in the broader cultural context, the struggle between the uptight anthropologist and the bricoleur plumber is as closely related to the themes in *Walkabout* as the aboriginal material in *The Last Wave* and the story of the lost children in *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. Perhaps even more so. Like the young Australian girl in Roeg's film, partly because of her cultural imprinting and partly to retain her own self image, Jill is terrified of the sexual threat posed by this powerful primitive. Both women remain passive at first and then humiliate the man when they feel most threatened. In *Walkabout* this occurs when the children reach an abandoned house where the aborigine performs a courtship dance, which the frightened girl helps to transform into a *danse macabre*. He is so humiliated by the rejection that he wills his own death. Whereas in Roeg's version of the cultural encounter, the aborigine is romanticized and the woman's limitations are seen as a tragic loss for both of them, Weir uses an ironic distance to equalize the equation and to show the limitations of both sides —not only culturally, but also sexually. The "primitive" man and the "cultured" woman are both victims of the fatal encounter.

When I asked Weir about the influence of Roeg's *Walkabout* on his work, he said that he saw both *Walkabout* and *Outback* (both made in Australia around 1969) in Europe rather than in Australia. Although *Walkabout* apparently had a much harder time with the critics at home, he acknowledged: "It was *Walkabout* that so enveloped me." When he was making *The Plumber*, Weir was not aware of any connection with Roeg's film, but now he sees the analogy in the central relationships. What *The Plumber* lacks is the visual richness that links both *Picnic* and *The Last Wave* to *Walkabout* stylistically, as well as thematically. Weir is not disturbed by this omission because the film was made for television and because he feels the subject matter did not require the same kind of stylistic choices.

In *The Plumber* one area of stylistic richness is the music, which helps to control the skillful modulation of tones and which also underscores the conflict between the two central characters. The opponents each have a musical track which they use to project their personality and dominate the apartment space. Jill plays tapes of the primitive drums from New Guinea, not only in an effort to pursue her work on her thesis, but also to remind herself of her previous victory over the shaman. The plumber's arrival is sometimes heralded by the blaring rock on his radio; once inside the Cowper bathroom, his captured territory, he asserts his dominance by switching to live music—boldly singing in the shower, or doing a Dylan imitation with guitar and harmonica.

Weir says that in his own creative process, music is an important source of visual imagery: "Sometimes music unlocks a flood of images—images combined with certain feelings. This occurs with all kinds of music—classical, rock, primitive." When he is shooting, Weir usually plays music on the set, to keep down the chatter and to offset the crushing effect of the long wait between takes. Sometimes he sits apart on the set, waiting like a boxer. Then the music inspires him by helping to create the magic that's needed to do a scene. Although the music played on the set doesn't necessarily relate to the music used in his films, there is an important similarity in the way the music functions. In all three films the music on the sound track is extremely effective in creating a magical atmosphere, in controlling feelings, and in expressing the primary power dynamics.

Peter Weir is one of the most promising young film-makers to have emerged in the seventies. Although *The Plumber* is much less ambitious than his other works, it nevertheless proves that he is capable of working very effectively with a wide range of tones and it continues to fulfill his promise.

NOTES

1. Weir was not conscious of any influence by Pinter, though he had studied his plays when he was at university. Acknowledging that many other people had observed the similarity, he said he was flattered to be compared with Pinter, whom he greatly admired. When I enumerated some of the common

characteristics—the central dramatic situation of a person alone in a room being disturbed by a visit from an unexpected stranger, the cultivated ambiguity, the combination of humor and psychic violence—he remarked that I had not mentioned Pinter's extraordinary dialogue, implying, quite rightly and quite modestly, that here the comparison broke down.

FILM BOOKS: Another Year, Another Round-Up

PECKINPAH
The Western Films

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Seydor, who has benefited from conversations with Peckinpah, is an unabashed partisan, and his book is not only a solid and sophisticated critical study, but also a detailed record of the persistent producer trouble that has resulted in the mutilation of so many Peckinpah films. Seydor understands a basic principle of critical analysis, that a work of art is not a "resolution" of tensions but a dramatization of them; if it fails to keep them in suspension—allowing them, to switch metaphors, to precipitate out in the form of an easily paraphrasable "moral"—then it becomes melodrama. Easier, no doubt, to review, and perhaps easier for audiences to like, but not what Peckinpah, as much despite himself as deliberately, has been about. Seydor includes enough biography (especially in a concluding chapter meditating upon the director and his work) for us to understand that Peckinpah is a truly obsessional artist, struggling for clarity on issues that upset and confuse him (and enough of us to give him a very large audience, especially if the studios allowed him to reach it in his own ways). No doubt he is difficult to work with; so are most talented people who are devoted to their art. And his talent happens to be stubbornly poetic, lyrically expressive, and tormentedly American (Seydor compares him in some detail with both Hemingway and Mailer).

Seydor writes of Peckinpah's films in finer detail than anyone else has, and his accounts of their production are fascinating, if often depressing. It's a pity that the book deals only with the Western films. Peckinpah happens to be a very crafty scriptwriter; and all the intricate plot side of his films is given full attention in the book (not, however, skimping his occasional blunders), in the context of an ample and supple discussion of the films' thematic significance. But Seydor thinks of the films as films; he sees them as complex structures of shots, not as dramatic structures which happen to be transmitted through a camera. And so he not only gives us a thorough understanding of how the films work, but he is in a position to do a minute analysis of the particular damage done by studio cutting. Thus we can at least hope that one upshot of this book will be that the studios are shamed into preparing decent versions of the films; future viewers could then experience them as Peckinpah meant them to be, and it would be clear for the record that Peckinpah is one of the three or four finest artists who have been working in Hollywood during the past decades.

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public. Fetherling does not question Hecht's reputation in any writing field or attempt to adjust it (up or down), let alone try to establish it in those areas where it is hazy or unformed. Evaluation enters into many particular discussions but it is not a main goal of the book as a whole.

The five lives of Ben Hecht might be, of course: the newspaperman, the novel and short story writer, the playwright, the screenwriter and director, the polemicist, and the memoirist. (That's at least six.) Fetherling proposes: Hecht the Bohemian, the Iconoclast, the Sophisticate, the Polemicist, and the Memoirist. As in a "certain Chinese encyclopedia" described by Borges, the items of this inventory can not stand side-by-side in a single place. The first three terms refer to themes or attitudes, the last two to kinds of writing or writing functions. Fetherling uses the first three categories to trace themes and attitudes throughout Hecht's career, and for this they have some use; but they never emerge distinctly from each other—mainly because they are somewhat synonymous—and they do not much clarify the material to which they are applied.

Perhaps inevitably in an overview, Fetherling's commentary is uneven in quality on the various Hechts. He is good on the novels and short stories and on Hecht as polemicist and as memoirist. He is adequate on Hecht as newspaperman and as playwright. Where he fails and fails badly is on Hecht as screenwriter, inevitably the subject of greatest interest to readers of these pages.

In discussing *Underworld* (1927), Fetherling contrasts Hecht's "realistic story" with Sternberg's "expressionist" direction. "Von Sternberg, in the way European directors have continued to do, was lessening the realism by transforming the script into an American myth." (93) Calling Sternberg a European director is wrong as fact and questionable in interpretation; also, Hecht had rubbed shoulders with expressionism, including a year spent in Germany in the early twenties. In any case, the interesting question is why the alleged cross-pruposes were such a good combination in this case.

> Action directors . . . such as John Ford, Henry Hathaway and William Wellman possessed much the same free spirit and anti-middle class attitudes [as Hecht]. With each of them, however, the stance took a different form. Thus Hecht's writing for each also took a different form and resulted in a different kind of script.
>
> Ford, for instance, was the most serious of the lot. Like the others he had a remarkably pronounced sense of history. He would harken back to a time of what he imagined were clearcut moral codes and clear distinctions between good and evil. He put that concept into play by sometimes representing history as Nature and pitting against it the ruggedest type of individual. Hecht wrote only one film for him, the John Hall-Dorothy Lamour vehicle, *The Hurricane*, in which exactly this idea is played out against a South Seas background. (97)

The passage is filled with errors of fact and judgment, half-truths, and sliding senses of terms. That Hecht's writing for each was different is an assertion that Fetherling does not come close to establishing. Did Hathaway or Wellman have a remarkably pronounced sense of history? Was Ford's sense of history simply or principally a harking back to clear-cut moral codes? The history-as-nature argument seems to incorporate the *Cahiers* analysis of *Young Mr. Lincoln*, but he gets the point quite wrong, as its extension to *The Hurricane* makes clear.

In treating Hecht's work with Howard Hawks, Fetherling says:

> *Twentieth Century*, *His Girl Friday*, and, to a lesser extent, *Viva Villa!* (are) a good indication of why the Hecht-Hawks collaboration was the most successful writer-director match either of them ever knew. Hawks taught Hecht a great deal about how to put both power and subtlety into films, knowledge Hecht employed when he became a director himself. Hecht in turn encouraged Hawks to develop the quality most absent in the films he made with other people: a sense of humour. (99)

To some, Hawks's collaboration with Jules Furthman was his most important—*Only Angels Have Wings*, *To Have and Have Not*, *The Big Sleep*, *Rio Bravo*, etc. *A Girl In Every Port*, *Bringing Up Baby*, the Furthman series, *Man's Favorite Sport?*—do not these show a sense of humor, displayed in more surprising places and in more unusual ways than in the Hecht films? Some also say that Hecht's collaboration with Hitchcock is as important as that with Hawks—*Foreign Correspondent*, *Spellbound*, *Notorious*, *The Paradine Case*. And why does Fetherling rest his Hecht-Hawks case on *these* films, two out of three adaptations of plays written earlier by Hecht and MacArthur? Hecht did not even make the adaptation for *His Girl Friday*, Charles Lederer did; and why omit *Scarface*, on which the actual work of collaboration seems to have been close?

Fetherling continues the passage quoted above in a way that reveals his tendency to cover his lacks of analysis with formulaic thinking. "Coming from Hecht it was a backhanded, epigrammatic and rapid-fire sense of humor, but it added a great deal to their relationship. It nearly succeeded for a time in making Hawks a more European, less American director. It almost made him a Sophisticate: almost but not quite." (99) What were Hecht and Hawks but distinctly American sophisticates? Their many differences and overlaps are not clarified by a European-American dichotomy. The style of rapid-fire epigramming and wisecracking—uniquely American—was patented by Hecht for a good while but neither began nor ended with him.

Fetherling does not mention Hecht's very interesting scripts for *Whirlpool* and *Where the Sidewalk Ends*.

Rather he says this: "Generally, Hecht's poorest scripts were those he wrote for the great exploiters of Hollywood, the Otto Premingers and Billy Roses to whom sex was part of the spectacle and box office appeal. In other words, for those who thought themselves above class distinctions and exemplars of the high tone, but who were really somewhat tacky, like their products." (102) He vents his wrath on films with little cultural protection, films it is safe to attack. Had Fetherling not dismissed these films in advance, he might have linked *Whirlpool* to *Spellbound* and *Where the Sidewalk Ends* to Hecht's early fiction and newsreporting. These are the kinds of relations that Fetherling elucidates in Hecht's novels and short stories; their absence in the chapters on film undermines the analysis seriously and suggests gaps in his research.

Fetherling is better in tracing similarities between *The Front Page* and the play and film of *Twentieth Century* (100-102) and on the changed nature of the Hechtian newsman in *Nothing Sacred* (103-104). He is not bad on the Hechtian elements in *Notorious*. "The influence of Hecht on the characters is marked, as they are cynics with soft centers thinking themselves several rungs above the riffraff with whom they do business. They are, all of them, one big Erik Dorn in an explosive situation, so without time for the self-pity and self-distortion which always mucked up life for Dorn and the other Hecht creations like him." (117). But he does not say what makes it a good screenplay or why Hecht's writing and Hitchcock's filming mesh so well in this case and so badly in *Spellbound*.

General propositions about Hecht as the dominant figure in all of his collaborations with other writers are offered without proof. "Whenever he collaborated on original material, or on an adaptation of something other than a recognized classic, Hecht was virtually always the dominant partner. In a working arrangement it would always be his humor, his oblique ribaldry, his world view that infected the other person's and, in the end, structured as well as flavoured the finished script." (146) Fetherling's own fine chapter "The Front Page—A Research" (67-86) opposes this sweeping conclusion. The two main characters were based on people MacArthur had worked with and Hecht said later: "I have never known since in anyone the inventiveness and certainty, the burst of creation, Charlie brought to *The Front Page*." Fetherling has again resorted to a formula to cover a lack of research on particular cases—admittedly of a staggering number in Hecht's case.

But Fetherling is informative on the seven films that Hecht wrote and directed in collaboration with Charles MacArthur and/or Lee Garmes, especially in tracing most of these films to earlier stories by Hecht or, in one case, by his wife Rose Caylor Hecht.

Fetherling's account of Hecht as screenwriter is notably inferior to that of Richard Corliss in *Talking Pictures;* but concentrating on Fetherling's film chapters makes the book sound far worse than it is. His chapters on the many other aspects of Hecht's writing are much better than these and do succeed in conveying an overall sense of Hecht. Film scholars and critics, no less than others, must know something of all of Hecht's work to know any of it well. —BRIAN HENDERSON

STORY AND DISCOURSE

By Seymour Chatman. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978.

Chatman says on the final page of his book:

> If we equate the word "style" with something like Foucault's *epistème*—the manner of thinking characteristic of a given era—the dictum takes on a powerful new resonance. Saussure, Jakobson, and Chomsky have created a new *epistème* for our generation. Their manner of thinking has provoked upheavals in many disciplines impinging on literature and the arts. The literary critical establishment in America and England—with some notable exceptions—has not entirely welcomed these efforts. Ignoring them will not make them go away. But serious challenges will help deflate their less justifiable pretensions and will sophisticate *everyone's* way of looking at literature. Only good can come of theoretical debate, if the debate is honest, tolerant and objective. (p. 266)

This declaration is not so central as its conclusory placement suggests, for *Story and Discourse* is not primarily an exposition of structuralist theories. It rather uses structuralist theories and other theories of narrative —and other research—to make a synthesis entirely its own. The function and object of the book are clarified by a comparison to Jonathon Culler's *Structuralist Poetics*, the best of a now sizable number of books in English that do exposit structuralist theories of literature. Culler's preface says: "My claim in this book is that in trying to revitalize criticism and free it from an exclusively interpretive role, in developing a programme which would justify it as a mode of knowledge and enable us to defend it with fewer reservations, we might do well to look to the work of French structuralists." (p. viii) Culler aims at "an account of structuralism based, at least in the first instance, on possible relationships between literary and linguistic studies." (p. ix) Thus Culler has a long chapter on structuralism and linguistic models and shorter chapters on the poetics of the lyric, the poetics of the novel, and several other topics.

Chatman is concerned primarily not with a body of theory or with the interaction of disciplines but with a problem: What is narrative? "There are few books in English on the subject of narrative in general, though libraries bulge with studies of specific genres—novels,

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epics, short stories, tales, fabliaux, and so on. Beyond the analysis of generic differences there lies the determination of what narrative is *in itself*." (p. 9) Pursuit of this inquiry leads to a very different book from Culler's, a different kind of book. Its focus is the nature of narrative, not a group of theories or individual theories of narrative. Chatman brings in various theories, or parts of theories, where relevant to his scheme. "My purpose is not to polemicize, but to synthesize the most powerful insights—Anglo-American, Russian, and French. I argue for no particular school." (p.11)

What is the scheme of the book? Between an introduction and a brief conclusion, the main body of the book is comprised of four long chapters: "Story: Events," "Story: Existents," "Discourse: Narrated Stories," and "Discourse: Covert Versus Overt Narrators." The division of narrative into story and discourse goes back to Aristotle. As refined by structuralist theory, the distinction becomes:

> each narrative has two parts: a story (*histoire*), the content or chain of events (actions, happenings), plus what may be called the existents (characters, items of setting); and a discourse (*discours*), that is, the expression, the means by which the content is communicated. In simple terms, the story is the *what* in a narrative that is depicted, discourse the *how*. (p. 19).

Implicit in this scheme is an axiom of great importance for structuralist work on narrative: "the necessity of separating narrative structure from any of its mere manifestations, linguistic or otherwise." (pp. 15-16) In much structuralist work, however, the axiom is an abstract one, empty of content, for all discussions tend to arise from and return to literature, and all examples are drawn from literary texts.

The subtitle of *Story and Discourse* is "Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film" and much of the book lives up to that title. Chatman discusses film, as well as literature, in both chapters on story and in both on discourse, although there are only three sections out of fifty on specific film topics—"Story-Space in Cinematic Narrative," "Point of View in Film," and "Interior Monologue in the Cinema." Most sections discuss filmic examples as well as literary ones; some that do not, such as the long discussion of character, apply to film as well as to literature. For film scholars, it is here that the uniqueness and value of the book will lie. But this double object also aids the inquiry into narrative itself, insuring that it does not become a theory of literary fiction passing for a theory of narrative generally.

Story and Discourse deserves praise for the lucidity of its organization, both overall and local, and for the clarity and grace of its writing, so rare in English texts on these topics. The selection and deployment of clarifying examples for nearly every point is one of the book's principal glories. It is difficult to imagine a better book on narrative for college film and literature courses. It should be made available in paperback immediately.

—BRIAN HENDERSON

CONTRIBUTORS, continued

ing on a book about French film during the German occupation. JOHN FELL is the author of *A History of Films*. SANDY FLITTERMAN is an editor of *First Discourse* and is writing a book on women and representation in the development of the French cinema. CLAUDIA GORBMAN, a musician, teaches at Indiana University. BRIAN HENDERSON's book, *A Critique of Film Theory*, was recently published by Dutton. PETER HOGUE teachers at Chico State University. ANDREW HORTON, editor of *European Filmmakers and the Art of Adaptation*, teaches at the University of New Orleans. KAREN JAEHNE lives in Berlin and has done research on Hungarian and Greek cinema. WILLIAM JOHNSON is the author of *Focus on the Science Fiction Film*. ANN KAPLAN teaches at Rutgers. BRUCE KAWIN wrote *Mindscreen*. MARSHA KINDER is co-editor of *Dreamworks*, a new journal just published by Human Sciences Press. JAY LEYDA is Gottesman Professor of Film at NYU. SCOTT MacDONALD teaches at Utica College and has written on avant-garde film for various journals. BILL NICHOLS is the editor of *Movies and Methods*. HARRIET POLT has written for the *Berkeley Monthly* and several film journals. JONATHAN ROSENBAUM writes for *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Film Comment*. CHRISTOPHER B. SHARRETT teaches film at Villanova. MICHAEL TARANTINO writes for many film journals, and is currently trying to escape from New Jersey. DON WILLIS is working on a supplement to his *Horror and Science Fiction Film Checklist*. FABRICE ZIOLKOWSKI is working on a PH.D. at UCLA.

ART/THEORY/ CRITICISM/POLITICS

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PETER WATKINS

By Joseph A. Gomez. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979.

Not only does Gomez provide a valuable survey of the career of a film-maker whose power and individuality have been conveniently ignored (Gomez's book is the first on Watkins), but he has expended considerable effort to document the unusual processes involved in creating such notable films as *The War Game* (1966), *Punishment Park* (1971), and *Edvard Munch* (1974).

Gomez reviews Watkins's early amateur career, which culminated in two award-winning short films: *Diary of a Soldier* (1959) and *The Forgotten Faces* (1961). Both films deal with serious issues—the absurdity of war, implications of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, respectively—in a manner which reveals crucial elements of what has become Watkins's mature style: the use of hand-held camera, a preponderance of close-ups framed in an unusual way (Watkins "frequently frames the top of the shot below the hair line rather than cropping at the top of the head" in order to give the image increased solidity and to force the viewer to look into the character's eyes), and a willingness to ignore cinematic convention by allowing characters to look at the camera/at the viewer. The effectiveness of these early films (prints are available at the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers, 63 Woodfield Lane, Ashtead, Surrey, KT 21 2BT, England) brought Watkins an offer to work for the BBC.

The Battle of Culloden (1964) was the first of two BBC features. It is a graphic reconstruction of the battle (the last major battle between the British and the Scottish Highland clans) and its aftermath, based on John Prebble's history. Gomez reviews the film's innovations, which "would alter traditional conceptions of filmic reconstructions." By presenting historical events from a perspective largely within the events themselves—the hand-held camera is consistently affected by the events of the battle, interviewers talk with participants—by developing a narrator "who fulfills multiple functions as he skillfully shifts from one role to another often without the slightest detection," and by carefully counterpointing visuals and sounds, Watkins attempts to break down the traditional barrier between filmed historical events and the detached, "objective" viewer. The goal was not simply to affect viewers emotionally and to undercut a traditional view of a heroic battle; Watkins hoped to generate a recognition that the grisly reality behind a sugar-coated "history" was immediately relevant to contemporary events (the Vietnam War, for example), the realities of which were often obscured by politicians.

While Watkins came to feel that *Culloden* communicated the contemporary significance of the events ineffectively—"People can say, *Culloden*, oh yes, that's a fantastic film, look what they did in those times . . . "—*The War Game* betrays no such limitations. Watkins's choice of a volatile contemporary issue (nuclear war) and his powerful delineation of it resulted in a nationwide controversy. Gomez's book is unusually valuable in its detailed review of the complex maneuverings within the BBC which ultimately resulted in the organization's suppression of a film it sponsored. Despite careful efforts by Watkins to keep the film from being too brutal (he shortened the original 90-minute conception to 47 minutes) and to protect it from attacks on its veracity (he used conservative estimates in his predictions of the damage nuclear holocaust would bring), the BBC finally announced that *The War Game* would not be broadcast because it was "too horrific for the medium of broadcasting." Watkins contended that the suppression was the result of pressure from the Home Office, and Gomez reveals evidence that would support his view. Whatever the particular source of the decision, Watkins battled doggedly against it; but while the film went on to win the Academy Award for Best Documentary of 1967, the BBC still maintains a worldwide ban on television screenings.

Most of the sparse criticism Watkins's films have received has dealt summarily with his work, seeing only the more obvious repetitive elements of his approach: his seriousness, his frequent use of television-style interviews within the films, his interest in fictional documentary, etc. Fortunately, Gomez has studied the films carefully enough to be able to chart Watkins's consistent exploration of a wide variety of filmic procedures. Of particular interest is Watkins's gradual abandonment of chronological sequence in favor of what he calls a "block structure," an editing procedure which can help viewers see how "the logic of the present may lead to the events of the future." For example, while most films about the future juxtapose the "reality" of the present and fantasized future events, *The War Game* presents the possible future in such a realistic manner that when imagined events are juxtaposed with candid interviews with several British citizens, their honest responses seem fantastic. If everyone is as poorly informed as *these* people, we realize, the future looks grim indeed. Gomez also carefully tracks Watkins's gradual development of a communal creative process. *Culloden* and *The War Game* were cast after mass meetings with ordinary citizens interested in participating in the projects and after one-on-one discussions with individual cast members about the issues involved. Watkins's goal was to create communal experiences out of which the films, and a heightened involvement in the

issues explored in the films, would develop. This goal, it has always seemed to me, provides a crucial dimension in Watkins's work. While his films provide, quite by design, no solutions to the problems they expose, the communal procedure Watkins developed in making these films does provide a model for approaching the issues themselves. If "average citizens" can work together to make a powerful film like *The War Game*, which maintains more of its effectiveness today than the overwhelming majority of films made by professionals in 1965, surely they are capable of working together to ameliorate the situation which generated the film.

Watkins's experience with the BBC resulted in a new kind of film, what Gomez calls "metaphorical features." *Privilege* (1967), *The Gladiators* (1969) and *Punishment Park* (1971) create visions of repressive near futures which are, in fact, metaphors for the present. While both *Privilege* and *The Gladiators* have much to recommend them, *Punishment Park* is the most interesting of the three, and, as Gomez reveals, largely because of the way in which it was made. Using a single Eclair camera, a production budget of $66,000, and amateur actors cast according to type (student activists played student activists; ex-law-enforcement officers played guards) Watkins was able to create and record a group psychodrama which, as he suggests, deals "with the rage developing within us—the increasing intolerance within our society. . . . it creates a framework within which the very participants in the film release their pent-up emotions and frustrations and fears; these that are common to us all, and which are created by the pressures of contemporary society." Having captured the reality of the characters' confrontations, Watkins developed the most complex counterpointing of visuals and multilayered sounds he had done to that time, in order to accomplish what he calls, "a fusion of . . . two contrasting elements; realism and expressionism": as Gomez explains, the two styles "are woven together in a cinematic tapestry which . . . gives the impression of an unconstrained, spontaneous recording of genuine events," but reveals, "through meticulous technical control, Watkins's own figurative and unabashedly subjective vision." Watkins hoped that the film's unusually powerful impact on audiences would, "in the same raw and admittedly painful manner as stage one in a psychiatric confrontation," lead viewers into a reexamination of themselves and into serious dialogue with each other.

Gomez's longest chapter is, quite sensibly, devoted to *Edvard Munch*. Watkins's most impressive film and, in many ways, the culmination of his previous work. Gomez usefully relates *Edvard Munch* to the tradition of "biopics" (this chapter is an expansion of Gomez's, "Peter Watkins's *Edvard Munch*," *Film Quarterly*, 30, Winter, 1976-77, pp. 38-46), in order to create a perspective for Watkins's innovations: among them, his use of film to present significant new research on Munch's career; his creation of a film which serves as a legitimate vision of both Munch's experience and his own; his expansion of the device of having the characters look at us in order to emphasize his theory of history: "I believe that we are all history, past, present, future, all participating in a common sharing and sensing of experiences which flow about us, forwards and backwards, sometimes simultaneously, without limitations from time or space."

Gomez concludes with relatively brief but informative discussions of two films—*70-talets Människor (The 70s People*, 1975); *Aftenlandet (Evening Land*, 1977)—and a videotape—*Fällan (The Trap*, 1975)—which have, unfortunately, not been released in this country; with a discussion of Watkins's future prospects in light of the director's deep concern about the debilitating effects of contemporary mass media (See Watkins's own "Media Repression a Personal Statement," *Ciné-Tracts*, 3, Winter, 1980, pp. 1-7); and with a filmography and an annotated bibliography of writings about Watkins.

Peter Watkins is an unusually admirable and useful critical work, in particular because it can serve as a source book for so many aspects of Watkins's career. Of course, it has limitations—a sometimes ponderous style which can get in the way of the analyses, a tendency to overlook Watkins' humor (in such films as *The Gladiators* and *Fällan*)—but these seem forgivable: in an era which seems to be moving in the direction of a continual rehashing of the obvious accomplishments of well-known film-makers, Gomez reminds us that the widespread evasion of Peter Watkins is one of the major embarrassments of contemporary film criticism.

—SCOTT MACDONALD

WHEN THE SHOOTING STOPS

By Ralph Rosenblum and Robert Karen. New York: Viking, 1979. $12.95.

The surprising thing about Ralph Rosenblum and Robert Karen's book is that nobody has written it until now. *When the Shooting Stops* is the story of what a film editor does; it's written for the average reader with an interest in movies; and it's the first book of its kind.

Rosenblum certainly has the credentials for writing the book: editor of such films as *Fail Safe*, *The Pawnbroker*, *A Thousand Clowns*, *The Night They Raided Minsky's*, *The Producers*, *Goodbye Columbus*, and most of Woody Allen's films, he is thoroughly versed in his craft, its present practice, and something of its history (though he's not always entirely accurate about historical details). Professional writer Robert Karen is responsible for the prose, and also did many of the inter-

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Rosenblum makes candid observations about specific directors he has worked with, as well as about directors in general. Mel Brooks, whose first film, *The Producers*, Rosenblum edited, is depicted as a neurotic bully; Woody Allen, with whom Rosenblum empathizes, has a "fade-into-the-woodwork manner that becomes more and more incongruous the more famous he becomes." But in general, directors have been infected with the *auteur* myth, to the detriment of their work and that of their collaborators: "the myth that the director is the sole creator of his film is a burden on almost everyone in the movie business, including the director, who frequently becomes weighed down by the excess responsibility, incapable of generating a team spirit, afraid to delegate authority, or unable to graciously accept the contributions of the expert collaborators he has summoned to his side."

Throughout, Rosenblum stresses the collaborative nature of film-making and the importance of the editor's frequently unheralded role. It's a healthy antidote to more fashionable views, and Rosenblum's stature as an insider lends it plausibility. —HARRIET POLT

CREATIVE DIFFERENCES
Profiles of Hollywood Dissidents

By Barbara Zheutlin and David Talbot. Boston: South End Press, 1978. $5.40 paper.

The narrative enigmas are certainly here: can leftists find a politically viable space in which to operate in Hollywood, what examples of such individuals are there, and how do they do it? These questions are truly vital ones and the attempt to answer them one of the qualities that makes it almost impossible to put the book down once begun. Zheutlin and Talbot's tentative conclusions about these questions, though, are not entirely reassuring. Their two main theses appear to be (1) that without an organized movement and without large-scale, collective organization within the industry severe limitations exist to what is politically possible, and (2) that without a sense of history or continuity mistakes are repeated, perhaps most of all the illusion that an individual leftist's personal success will leave behind some significant alteration in the political tenor of the Hollywood industry.

No doubt Zheutlin and Talbot choose "dissidents" with great care for it would be difficult to find a more forcefully political word that would do justice to the wide range of political attitudes expressed by their subjects. The ones who have the strongest bonds with collective work and historical development are also the clearest, most incisive voices, harboring few illusions about the long-term significance of their own contribution in isolation, notably Albert Maltz, Abraham Polonsky and Hilda Haynes. A stern warning note on how to regard the other, more contemporary profiles, is indirectly sounded by Maltz when he comments, "It interests me very much that you say there are left-wing people here who want to accomplish something—I haven't known any of them" (p. 51).

But the overall tone of *Creative Differences* is positive, perhaps too positive. In the absence of a large-scale movement individuals struggling to effect progressive change as best they can must be found, their efforts celebrated. That these efforts present contradictory lessons seems less important to Zheutlin and Talbot than that they try at all: veteran black actress Hilda Haynes "is convinced that organized pressure is the only way to fundamentally change the entertainment industry" (p. 165), while the black director Michael Schultz "has shunned political involvement" and "prefers to operate individually" (p. 165). Yet a full chapter is devoted to each. The authors conclude Haynes's chapter by praising her "grace and dignity" as a person despite 30 years of "misfortunes and injustices" (p. 188) and Schultz's by stressing the enormity of his task—trying to reach large numbers with an undiluted product. Their final words: "But at least he is making the effort" (p. 212).

This sense of optimism-at-all-costs percolates up through their discussions of Haskell Wexler, Jane Fonda, Thom Mount (executive vice-president in charge of production at Universal and sixties student activist), Mike Gray (maker of *The Murder of Fred Hampton* and screenwriter of *The China Syndrome*), Lynn Phillips (writer on *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* and ex-Newsreel member), and Jesus Salvador Treviño (a Chicano activist who has been successfully involved in producing

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material for public television). Even when they turn to behind-the-scenes activists who attempted to build a large-scale movement they remain sanguine, despite the major obstacles encountered and not overcome. They profile three clerical-level women heavily involved in the Inter-Studio Feminist Alliance and Alliance of Media Women, all of whom must personally contend with problems of limited political success. But this is a theme of minor interest to Zheutlin and Talbot. Even though one enters the real estate business, another takes up church work and the third secures a tedious job on an afternoon soap opera, the authors spend little time on questions of how people cope with setbacks, of what lessons they carry with them or what gains they cement into the institutions with which they must contend.

Instead a blanket optimism prevails. Setbacks today will be victories tomorrow (despite the grim reminders etched across the careers of Polonsky, Maltz and Haynes). They achieve this optimism partly through the strategy of profile rather than interview. This enables them to attribute thoughts and attitudes to individuals that appear to balance out on the optimistic side. Of Bruce Green (a freelance production assistant) they write, for example, "Although Green was pleased to be working, he felt uncomfortable about the content of the film he was helping to make. . . . But the young man soon found a way to relate to his work which allowed him to keep going" (pp. 323-324).

Sometimes this approach makes it hard to sort out the authors' opinion from that of their subjects since there are no footnotes or other forms of documentation. At one point, for example, they paraphrase Jane Fonda: "Movies are primarily a visceral medium, Fonda believes. And there is only so much enlightenment which can be induced in an audience through visceral means" (p. 139). Who speaks the second sentence—Fonda or the authors? Is it an implicit criticism of Fonda's position, which their discussion of Mike Gray's relationship to *The China Syndrome* substantiates but again without actually directing an explicit criticism at Fonda, or is it a continuation of Fonda's own thought they neutrally pass along? Despite such obscurities the sense remains that the individuals profiled are working as best they can in the midst of enormous difficulty to maintain a sense of political commitment and personal decency and to retain some hope in the possibilities of more united action. Yet in attempting to explain the political successfulness of the TV-movie *Katharine* (a film that gives one of the best depictions of the radicalization process for white, middle-class students during the sixties), the authors' approach leads them into some patently absurd logic: "Because Kagan (the director) was the son of a Rabbi who marched for peace and civil rights, because he had gone to college during a period when it was exceedingly difficult for concerned students not to be affected by radical ideas and activities, because he was a serious craftsman who took pride in the integrity of his work . . . (sic) Kagan's movie about 1960s activism was *not* crudely drawn and sensationalistic" (p. 306).

That the authors could allow such a senseless attempt at explanation to stand may be symptomatic of a deeper problem: the absence of criteria by which to justify their optimism either in terms of what an organized left in Hollywood should do or of what makes a film progressive in the first place. How is social change possible within the entertainment industry? In their introduction the authors say they believe "Hollywood is capable of flashes of insight" and they therefore seek "to understand how and why these flashes occur" (viii). They also remind us that conventions such as the individual hero, the shift of social conflict into personal, moral terms and simplistic resolutions deform political intentions (xi). Yet they also seem to feel that the closer to the seats of studio power and the basics of dramatic convention "dissidents" approach, the better. For them *Coming Home* seems to be a paradigm, showing that "if one could master the conventional dramatic techniques of Hollywood moviemaking, one could communicate progressive ideas to a mass audience" (p. 135). Likewise Thom Mount's rise to major executive power earns high marks even though the great bulk of the filmmakers they profile achieved their success on the *margins* of the Hollywood industry (ranging from Polonsky's directorial debut through Hilda Haynes's role in the film version of *The River Niger*, financed independently by black businessmen, and Lynn Phillips's work with the independently syndicated *Mary Hartman* to Jesus Treviño's work with *public* television. Unfortunately Zheutlin and Talbot offer no overview or political theory of how close to the heart of Hollywood progressives can successfully venture professionally, aesthetically, or politically.

Where does this leave us? In *Creative Differences*, at least, it leaves us with a set of contradictions: dramatic conventions prevail that sap a film's political strength, but by using these conventions a film can be progressive. Power can be gained, but the more that is gained, the more its political use is limited. Individuals can succeed, but radical change remains a distant hope. And their reasoning regarding *Katharine* leads to yet another cul-de-sac. If Kagan's progressiveness-by-association will not suffice to explain the movie's political success, then what will? Their chapter-long discussion of this project gives no clear answer. *Katharine* remains, for them, an "exception." It opens up, though, the question of how we gauge a film political in the first place and of what role(s) leftist individuals can and should play in Hollywood. Albert Maltz reminds us that in the thirties the Hollywood left as a group devoted considerable energy not to making radical films but to inhibiting

the access of right-wing individuals and ideas to the screen through large, organized protests (against Leni Reifenstahl, for example). Furthermore, truly revolutionary films are not very likely products of a capitalist system under any circumstances, whereas films strongly critical of existing values or institutions do occasionally appear—even from the hands of "apolitical" or conservative film-makers like John Ford or, quite recently, Peter Yates *(Breaking Away)*. This raises the large question of how popular culture is "read" by its audience, of what effect cracks or gaps opened up in the dominant ideology by a director's style have. This whole area, though of considerable interest to some critics and filmmakers, finds no place in Zheutlin and Talbot's book. Nonetheless, Zheutlin and Talbot remain convinced that revolutionary individuals should attempt to find footholds in the Hollywood system. The only alternative they see is to opt *entirely* for the notion of counter- or alternative systems, which they reject: "There is no retreating from a cultural system as vast and encompassing as (Hollywood)" (p. xi). Their profiles provoke us to think further about the kind of possibilities remaining, in other industries as well as Hollywood, once retreat is judged impossible. There are no answers in the book or in Hollywood itself, yet, but at least Zheutlin and Talbot present us with "positive images" of what is possible, images which mask serious theoretical deficiencies behind a generous optimism to be sure but which can also stimulate reflection and debate on precisely these deficiencies. —BILL NICHOLS

WRITING THE SCRIPT

By Wells Root. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1980. Paper, $5.95.

Judging from this book and another similar one by Syd Field (annotated in the Textbooks section below) there seems to be a formula for writing books about screenwriting.

They are written in short sentences and short paragraphs. (They often sound as if they had been dictated.) Often the paragraphs are *no more than two lines.*

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—E.C.

A CINEMA OF LONELINESS
Penn, Kubrick, Coppola, Scorsese, Altman

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This is a very respectable book with a very lively subject, but it achieves less than it might have. Kolker provides some excellent close readings of major films by five of the most interesting American-born directors now working; and he augments these close readings with a variety of historical, critical, and theoretical issues. But the format of Kolker's book puts him in the awkward position of tireless explicator for five directorial visions which, as the author himself notes, are going nowhere: "These are films made in isolation and, with few exceptions, about isolation. For without challenging the ideology many of them find abhorrent, they only perpetuate the passivity and aloneness that have become their central image." Consequently, even though it is often very perceptive, the book ends up getting caught somewhere between Kolker's admiration of these directors and his sense of their limitations.

But Kolker's commentaries will surely be very useful to students of these directors' films, and the issues he has defined here must be taken into serious account in future attempts to come to critical terms with the post-Hollywood cinema of the sixties and seventies. I found his chapters on Kubrick and Altman the most satisfying in the book, particularly because of the author's skill in defining the central dynamics of both men's work. Indeed, Kolker is especially responsive to the complexities of post-modernist self-consciousness:

> . . . the images in *Barry Lyndon,* these forms of light and color, human figures, natural landscapes, architectural surroundings, resist yielding a content. They point more to themselves than they do to any expected narrative event. No, Kubrick is not making paintings come alive; he is playing our perceptual expectations of painting against those of cinema.

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> The narrative structure of Altman's films—from *M.A.S.H.* on—develops out of, or as part of, their spatial structure. The movement from center to periphery demands an abandonment of straightforward narrative development. Events on the edges gain equal importance with events in the middle: we see and hear more than we are used to.
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> It is not that Altman's films contain unexpected turns; they are unexpected turns. They are quiet attempts at a deconstruction of the narrative and generic truths that we have taken for granted in our cinema. In dislocating their visual and narrative centers, they dislocate their generic centers as well, and begin to reveal to us some of the ways in which the smooth, undistracted, and unquestioning forms of cinematic storytelling have lied to us.

(Note, however, the half-buried hedging—"begin to reveal.")

Some of the most stimulating parts of the book are "digressions"—on editing and ideology, on Welles and Ford, on fascism and film form, on *film noir* and familiarization, on screwball comedy. These side trips add a good deal to Kolker's discussions of specific films, though on ideological issues in particular he seems reluctant to pursue conclusions in any far-reaching way. For example, he uses Susan Sontag's ideas on fascist aesthetics for part of his chapter on Kubrick, but he leaves the reader to struggle alone with the realization that this issue has disturbing relevance to several other films examined in the book. Kolker borrows ideas developed by a numbre of politically oriented critics, but only in a distinctly limited way. It's hard not to feel that there is a gap between the author's aesthetic interests and his sense of social and political dissatisfaction, and that his sympathy for the "lonely," blocked vision of these films shields him from the more caustic critique that his book repeatedly approaches.

Exasperatingly (but—given the nature of the man's career—necessarily), the chapter on Penn concludes on a note of impasse. The chapters on Coppola and Scorsese embody a sense of impasse in ways that are both illuminating and frustrating. Kolker's discussion of the *Godfather* films provides a persuasive commentary on their profoundly compromised ideology, and yet—in partial defiance of the evidence he has gathered—Kolker seems to want to view Coppola as "quite possibly the greatest sleight-of-hand artist in American film of the seventies—and the great subversive." Later, he makes a good case for the sad, street-wise humanism of *Mean Streets*, but he has higher regard for the tortured confusions of *Taxi Driver*, on behalf of which he must do some extended and ingenious special pleading. He seems to stand in awe of the sheer weight of certain films, in spite of his own best insights.

Some of the book's dilemmas might have been fruitfully circumvented by a more "existential" approach, a freewheeling examination of compromised filmic strategies in the context of an ongoing cultural crisis. Better, I think, to dissect the dead ends and celebrate the signs of promise, lucidly and ruthlessly, than to concentrate on whole directorial visions where wholeness does not and perhaps cannot exist. But, for all that, *A Cinema of Loneliness* is good enough that even its failings prove stimulating.

—PETER HOGUE

SEXUAL STRATAGEMS: THE WORLD OF WOMEN IN FILM

Edited by Patricia Erens. New York: Horizon Press, 1979. $8.95.

In the US, feminist film studies have a way of lagging behind major European theoretical developments. Thus this anthology is both a welcome collection which, by consolidating a diversity of material, substantially augments a rather skimpy body of criticism, *and*, at the same time, a fairly outdated coverage of a field which has developed profoundly over the past ten years.

What appears to be an antitheoretical bias in the massive bibliography turns out, in fact, to be a major shortcoming in the book's overall conception. The anthology is divided into two sections which are subdivided in turn. Part I, The Male-Directed Cinema, contains two general articles under the heading Images and Distortions, then six articles on the image of women in films directed by men. Part II, The Women's Cinema, is composed of three sections: three articles discuss the notion of "a feminist perspective," a section on women directors treats six film-makers (Blanché, Schub, Deren, Dulac, Riefenstahl, and Zetterling, with an unclear principle of selection), and a final section examines individual films by women.

Erens sees neither the category of "images of women" nor "women directors" as problematic. However, the notion of "images of women" is already complex and contradictory because an image never exists in itself, but is always understood in a socially and psychologically mediated way—its *process* of production must be examined before any conclusions can be drawn about its effect. Likewise, a discussion of "films made by women" is easily open to the rather superficial conclusion that the simple conjunction of "women" and "film" automatically implies a feminist viewpoint.

For example, a phrase from Erens's introduction illustrates this too-facile utilization of complicated notions. "The universal humanism of a great artist like Jean Renoir has created memorable female portraits . . . alive with intelligence and sensuality." Such unquestioned terms as "universal humanism," "great artist," "memorable female portraits," representative as they are of the overall lack of theoretical rigor which characterizes the anthology, must be challenged for their simplistic acceptance of very problematic issues.

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I did not, however, intend to fault the anthology for the fact that its sum is less satisfying than its individual parts. Several excellent articles of feminist criticism have been included (among them, Lucy Fischer on *Dames*, Anna-Marie Taylor on *Lucia*) as well as landmark articles like Julia LeSage's on feminist film criticism and Claire Johnston's on feminist counter-cinema. But the almost total obviation of theoretical material is disturbing. Finding nothing in the body of the text, I looked to the bibliography which, though substantial, is rather strangely skewed. Countless articles from *Vogue* and *Ms.* are included, while absolutely no mention is made of the vast amount of important feminist *theoretical* work, or of *Camera Obscura*, a leading American journal of feminism and film theory. While Teresa de Lauretis's feminist review of *The Night Porter* is mentioned, there is no reference to her vastly more important *Ciné-tracts* article on Semiotics, Feminism, Politics and Culture. Likewise there is no mention of Judith Mayne's important work on *King Kong*, Ann Kaplan's anthology of textual analyses *(Women in Film Noir)*, Jacqueline Rose's feminist study of paranoia in *The Birds*, Sumiko Higashi's perceptive book on female stereotyping in the silent cinema *(Virgins, Vamps, and Flappers)*, and so on. But such "feminists" as Vincent Canby, John Simon, and Jerzy Kosinski are all cited, presumably because their articles deal with women.

There is an important difference between theoretical reflection on film in order to produce a coherent formulation of the issues of feminist cinema and descriptive analysis of films from a feminist perspective. Content analysis will always be content analysis, feminist or otherwise: it can never substitute for theory. Even though this is a greatly welcome improvement over the eclectic *pot-pourri* of *Women and the Cinema* published in 1977, once again we must accept a feminist anthology with caution: although Erens has done a commendable job of compiling volumes of material and bibliographical and filmographic information, *Sexual Stratagems* provides only a first—necessary but insufficient—step in the area of feminist film studies. In fact, it does indeed appear that the "sexual" "world of women" is emphasized to the utter detriment of "stratagems" "in film."

—SANDY FLITTERMAN

THE LIMITS OF INFINITY
The American Science Fiction Film 1950-75

By Vivian Carol Sobchack. South Brunswick and New York: A.S. Barnes, 1980. $14.50.

Sobchack has set herself a task which most of us who write about the SF film try to avoid: making a detailed analysis of the genre's nature and appeal. Her only concession has been to limit her field of study to the most productive quarter century of the most prolific SF-film-making country.

The approach is three-pronged, with sections probing the content, images and sounds of the SF film. With rare exceptions, Sobchack builds up her arguments meticulously, quoting from a wide variety of critical sources and giving apt examples from an equally wide variety of films. Although she describes herself as an SF film buff, and defends several films that critics usually dismiss with contempt, she never slips into what she calls the "delightful but critically unproductive game film enthusiasts like to play: 'Swap that Shot' or 'The Robot You Love to Remember.'" Not only description but also the choice of stills illuminates the analysis, moving it step by step toward its distant goal.

Like a pioneer on Mars, Sobchack cannot avoid pitfalls. These are thickest on the ground in the first section, where she attempts to draw precise distinctions between SF and horror. (While recognizing that the two are sometimes inextricably mixed, she also tries to define the kind of film in which this happens.) From time to time she drops in a "never" or "always" that dares the reader to disagree. Well then: "Our sympathy is never evoked by an SF Creature." What about the Invisible Man, Soames in *The Mind of Mr. Soames*, the alien "wife" in *Unearthly Stranger*, and Charly?

It may be objected that Soames and Charly are not Creatures in the same sense as the Black Lagoon dweller (though doesn't he too evoke sympathy?), the Thing or the Blob. But this objection holds only if Sobchack has established a definition of an SF Creature—which she has not. Her attempt to define SF by way of its content leads—and I think can only lead—to the assumption of arbitrary essences.

In Part 2, on "The Look of SF," Sobchack leaves essences for the world of forms, and here she hits her stride. After pointing out that, unlike other genres, SF does not rely on specific icons—that a spaceship or a robot, for example, may signify "good" in one film, "evil" in another, and be neutral in a third—she shows how it develops a general iconography from varying combinations of the alien and the familiar. Then, in Part 3, she breaks new ground in quest of the aural icons of SF, which she finds primarily in various modes of speech and sound effects.

My only major reservation in the last two-thirds of the book concerns the preponderance of examples drawn from the low-budget movies of the fifties. While Sobchack devotes many pages to such high-budget color films of the sixties and seventies as *2001*, *A Clockwork Orange* and *Silent Running* (with references to *Star Wars*, *Close Encounters* and other films later than her 1975 cutoff date), she does not always show how they too

I did not, however, intend to fault the anthology for the fact that its sum is less satisfying than its individual parts. Several excellent articles of feminist criticism have been included (among them, Lucy Fischer on *Dames*, Anna-Marie Taylor on *Lucia*) as well as landmark articles like Julia LeSage's on feminist film criticism and Claire Johnston's on feminist counter-cinema. But the almost total obviation of theoretical material is disturbing. Finding nothing in the body of the text, I looked to the bibliography which, though substantial, is rather strangely skewed. Countless articles from *Vogue* and *Ms.* are included, while absolutely no mention is made of the vast amount of important feminist *theoretical* work, or of *Camera Obscura*, a leading American journal of feminism and film theory. While Teresa de Lauretis's feminist review of *The Night Porter* is mentioned, there is no reference to her vastly more important *Ciné-tracts* article on Semiotics, Feminism, Politics and Culture. Likewise there is no mention of Judith Mayne's important work on *King Kong*, Ann Kaplan's anthology of textual analyses *(Women in Film Noir)*, Jacqueline Rose's feminist study of paranoia in *The Birds*, Sumiko Higashi's perceptive book on female stereotyping in the silent cinema *(Virgins, Vamps, and Flappers)*, and so on. But such "feminists" as Vincent Canby, John Simon, and Jerzy Kosinski are all cited, presumably because their articles deal with women.

There is an important difference between theoretical reflection on film in order to produce a coherent formulation of the issues of feminist cinema and descriptive analysis of films from a feminist perspective. Content analysis will always be content analysis, feminist or otherwise: it can never substitute for theory. Even though this is a greatly welcome improvement over the eclectic *pot-pourri* of *Women and the Cinema* published in 1977, once again we must accept a feminist anthology with caution: although Erens has done a commendable job of compiling volumes of material and bibliographical and filmographic information, *Sexual Stratagems* provides only a first—necessary but insufficient—step in the area of feminist film studies. In fact, it does indeed appear that the "sexual" "world of women" is emphasized to the utter detriment of "stratagems" "in film."

—SANDY FLITTERMAN

THE LIMITS OF INFINITY
The American Science Fiction Film 1950-75

By Vivian Carol Sobchack. South Brunswick and New York: A.S. Barnes, 1980. $14.50.

Sobchack has set herself a task which most of us who write about the SF film try to avoid: making a detailed analysis of the genre's nature and appeal. Her only concession has been to limit her field of study to the most productive quarter century of the most prolific SF-film-making country.

The approach is three-pronged, with sections probing the content, images and sounds of the SF film. With rare exceptions, Sobchack builds up her arguments meticulously, quoting from a wide variety of critical sources and giving apt examples from an equally wide variety of films. Although she describes herself as an SF film buff, and defends several films that critics usually dismiss with contempt, she never slips into what she calls the "delightful but critically unproductive game film enthusiasts like to play: 'Swap that Shot' or 'The Robot You Love to Remember.'" Not only description but also the choice of stills illuminates the analysis, moving it step by step toward its distant goal.

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Paradoxical as it may seem, my reservations and disagreements should be counted to the book's credit. The least interesting section—on music—is also the one I found the most unexceptionable. Elsewhere, without being contentious, Sobchack continually prods the reader to review his or her assumptions. This is especially true of Part I—which, despite its questionable basis, remains informative, stimulating, and a pleasure to read. —WILLIAM JOHNSON

PERSONAL VIEWS: EXPLORATIONS IN FILM

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In broad terms, what this book chronicles in some detail is Wood's discovery of—and engagement with—some of the theoretical issues in film theory that were being broached in *Screen* in the early seventies, including those which directly challenged many of the presuppositions of his own earlier work. While the seriousness and earnestness of Wood's grappling with these issues are never in question, it does seem unfortunate that for many of the readers of *Film Comment*—where several portions of this book first appeared—Wood's paraphrases of certain arguments in *Screen* were taken to represent that magazine's overall thrust rather than a few isolated issues within a much broader context (which included semiology, Russian formalism, psychoanalysis and the avant-garde—none of which commands much of Wood's attention or interest here).

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SELF AND CINEMA
A Transformalist Perspective

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Cornwell begins by placing Snow's film work within the context of his general achievements as an accomplished jazz musician, painter, sculptor and photographer. She then outlines a concept of formalism via an art history approach. Two types of formalism are presented: one, Anglo-American, is exemplified by the writings of Clive Bell and Roger Fry and is seen as generally conservative; a second, more "continental" formalism, appears in the work of Malévich, Fernand Léger, Robbe-Grillet and Shlovsky. It is in this second type of formalism that the author places Snow.

Snow's approach to film-making is certainly more structured and formal in its organization than that of a Stan Brakhage, and Cornwell draws heavily on this distinction throughout the book. The separate chapters devoted to Snow's most important film works *(Wavelength, Back and Forth, La Région Centrale* and *Rameau's Nephew . . .)* are highlighted by very careful and detailed descriptions of the films (no small task) and are accompanied by comments which place them critically within the formalist structure. Additional chapters deal with Snow's non-film photographic work (its relation with film) and with the autobiographical elements which help constitute a reflexive, modernist aesthetic for the artist.

It seems therefore that the writer's approach to the film-maker is as carefully structured, methodical and intelligent as the artist's work. More problematic are Cornwell's notion of a "transparent cinema" and her apparent unwillingness to discuss Snow's work in the context of more recent film theories (i.e., semiotics). Still, the book is certainly a major contribution to an understanding of an equally major film-maker.

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THE FILMS AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF MICHAEL SNOW

By Regina Cornwell. PMA Books, Toronto, and New York Zoetrope, 1980. $19.95.

Relatively few full-length studies have been devoted to film-makers of the North American avant-garde, but Regina Cornwell's monograph on Michael Snow's work is a welcome addition to the list. Snow's name already commands a certain attention and Cornwell makes a more concrete case for him as an *auteur,* even if this term would need re-evaluating in the context of the avant-garde.

Cornwell begins by placing Snow's film work within the context of his general achievements as an accomplished jazz musician, painter, sculptor and photographer. She then outlines a concept of formalism via an art history approach. Two types of formalism are presented: one, Anglo-American, is exemplified by the writings of Clive Bell and Roger Fry and is seen as generally conservative; a second, more "continental" formalism, appears in the work of Malévich, Fernand Léger, Robbe-Grillet and Shlovsky. It is in this second type of formalism that the author places Snow.

Snow's approach to film-making is certainly more structured and formal in its organization than that of a Stan Brakhage, and Cornwell draws heavily on this distinction throughout the book. The separate chapters devoted to Snow's most important film works *(Wavelength, Back and Forth, La Région Centrale* and *Rameau's Nephew . . .)* are highlighted by very careful and detailed descriptions of the films (no small task) and are accompanied by comments which place them critically within the formalist structure. Additional chapters deal with Snow's non-film photographic work (its relation with film) and with the autobiographical elements which help constitute a reflexive, modernist aesthetic for the artist.

It seems therefore that the writer's approach to the film-maker is as carefully structured, methodical and intelligent as the artist's work. More problematic are Cornwell's notion of a "transparent cinema" and her apparent unwillingness to discuss Snow's work in the context of more recent film theories (i.e., semiotics). Still, the book is certainly a major contribution to an understanding of an equally major film-maker.

—FABRICE ZIOLKOWSKI

FRANCOIS TRUFFAUT

By Annette Insdorf. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1978.

Unlike many directors, François Truffaut has been blessed with intelligent and perceptive critics throughout his career, especially those writing in English. Annette Insdorf's new book fits snugly into this tradition of excellence, and even goes the earlier studies one better by treating the films with the comprehensiveness they deserve. Previous books on Truffaut, for the most part, were simply victims of their formats, since the modest number of pages in conjunction with the plethora of stills usually prevented any in-depth examination.

The most striking feature of Insdorf's study is the intense concentration she brings to her discussion of each film. Her insights come thick and fast, in the best New Critical fashion, and she manages to open up films like *Fahrenheit 451*, for example, which have previously been considered nearly worthless. Thus, the ending of this film (among the book people who walk about the winter woods memorizing texts), which most critics have found particularly unconvincing, Insdorf interprets as betraying a deep-seated ambiguity about the viability of this alternative society based on books.

She is even better at relating the films to one another, even the most seemingly disparate, both visually and thematically. She convincingly links up, for instance, the statue Jules and Jim become obsessed by, the game of "statue" played by the three principals of *Two English Girls* (which, Insdorf says, "may be Truffaut's richest and most complex film"), and the final freeze-fame of the much earlier *400 Blows*. We also come to understand the absolute centrality of language and its artistic creation as Insdorf demonstrates the connections among the diaries of Adele H. and Dr. Itard (of *The Wild Child*), the organizing voice-over of Truffaut's first film, *Les Mistons*, Claude's struggle to record and transmute into art the story of *Two English Girls*, and finally, the attempt of Bertrand, in *The Man Who Loved Women*, to understand his life by writing a book of the same title. Insdorf finds literally hundreds more connectives (some perhaps a bit less convincing than others) that make Truffaut's work appear in all its real complexity for the first time.

Naturally, in such an ambitious book there are also bound to be missteps. So, for example, she concludes that *The Bride Wore Black* "does not succeed as a Hitchcockian film," without asking herself whether this is the sole or proper criterion by which to judge it. The only remotely serious problem with Insdorf's study, however, concerns her method of organization. She has, by beginning *in medias res* and hopping about thereafter, quite properly attempted to subvert the forced plodding of the ruthlessly chronological. But in so doing, she will surely confuse the reader who does not have a strict sense of exactly which films appeared when. In addition, by placing her chapters about Truffaut's aesthetic debts to Hitchcock and Renoir near the front of the book, she conveys the impression (quite unconsciously, I'm sure) that Truffaut is really little more than the sum of the two older directors, and thus perpetuates an old, reductive saw of Truffaut criticism we should be trying our best to get beyond. Unlike earlier critics, however, Insdorf manages to be very specific about Truffaut's relationships with his cinematic mentors, which obviously do exist, and nowhere have they been spelled out any better.

Her decision to forego chronological organization in favor of a thematic one does pay off in the remaining three chapters devoted, respectively, to his treatment of women, children, and himself in his films. In the face of the nearly all-male lineup of Truffaut explicators she is, as might be expected, particularly good on Truffaut's complex and shifting view of women. In the last chapter, she painstakingly charts the presence of the artist's personality and life history in nearly *all* the films, instead of limiting her discussion, as most critics have, to the obvious analogues in the Antoine Doinel/Jean-Pierre Léaud series.

This is an especially insightful, highly intelligent study that will serve nicely until Truffaut's prolific output renders it, too, obsolete. —PETER BRUNETTE

PAPPY
The Life of John Ford

By Dan Ford. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1979. $12.95.

Ford's grandson, who had access to all the family information, and also interviewed many of his colleagues, reveals that Ford was rather more complicated than even his last years' cantankerous interviews suggested. The book contains the wealth of droll anecdotes obligatory in a Hollywood biography, but it also focuses on the man and his work—giving, incidentally, rather short shrift to everything from *The Searchers* onward. Ford cared more about the military than movies (he served in the OSS and did some wartime coastal spying in his yacht), and cared more about movies than about his long-suffering wife; he had episodes of serious alcoholism; he could be manipulative and cruel to people he worked with; he was, in short, not at all the kind of grandfatherly good guy one might expect from the sentimentality of his films. But then, as Pauline Kael and others have said, it is probably not possible to be both a nice guy and a good film director; and after all, since directors do in a way play God, what else could we

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Ford's limitations and his strengths are so inextricably linked that to ignore either is to distort his art and to denigrate his achievement. To call Ford the cinema's Shakespeare is to do him an injustice; to call him its Faulkner or Melville would do him (and them) honor enough. —DAVID COURSEN

MINDSCREEN
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defense of first-person cinema, voice-over and all. The study operates, incidentally, entirely within the realm of narrative film, despite occasional allusions to experimental work and the fact that, as Kawin duly notes, experimental films are normally mindscreens in their entirety.

Kawin has an appealingly lively style and an open enthusiasm for films, which is rare among people with serious theoretical interests. His analysis is necessarily complex, but it is always highly readable. By using the term "mindscreen" he postulates an interaction between film and viewer such that the viewer "reads" the film as, so to speak, visual thinking—and fantasizes a "thinker" for it, who may or (more usually) may not be identical with the known director of the film. Indeed, mindscreen films at their ultimate—*Man with the Movie Camera, Marienbad, Persona*—give the impression of narrating themselves. Kawin, who is a bold sort, goes so far as to say that such films manifest "the self-conscious mind of the work itself." He cites some scientific phenomena which make this notion less epistemologically weird than it first sounds, and he marshals many films in his argument. His basic notion can perhaps best be grasped by comparing *Rashomon* and *Marienbad*. For Kawin, *Rashomon* is composed of a number of mindscreen sections within its framing materials, but its overall structure leads us to wonder "what really happened"; with *Marienbad*, however, the film *is* "what happens."

After a preliminary lightning survey of early film narrative technique, and a few bows in the direction of Lacan and Metz, Kawin sets out to show how this notion can produce useful understandings of what are usually considered difficult films. He begins with those two masterpieces of reflexive cinema, *Sherlock Jr.* and *Citizen Kane*—to which he adds *Hair-Raising Hare*, a remarkable Bugs Bunny cartoon. The argument grows in complexity as he then defends Milton Moses Ginsberg's *Coming Apart* through an intricate and (I found) lucid analysis. This ugly and unpleasant but relentlessly rigorous film about a psychiatrist who (through a hidden camera) becomes a voyeur in his own life, and is destroyed by it, illustrates for Kawin how a film may be purely first-person but *not* a mindscreen. And thus he comes to *Marienbad*, that central modern work, from which the best of Bergman and Godard follows. Kawin finds the retrospective mindscreens incorporated in *Wild Strawberries* unsuccessfully "theatrical," but *Persona* seems to be the ultimate mindscreen film, practically inventing cinema for itself—an awesomely sophisticated and finished work. By contrast, Godard is full of rough edges, signs of visible struggle between the director and the film process; Godard manages to provide his self-consciousness a first-person voice within the narrative structure (perhaps, Kawin feels, most successfully in *Two or Three Things*, though the Godard-Gorin *Tout va bien* has more striking devices within it).

The question is, of course, whether Kawin is anthropomorphizing films through his mindscreen analyses. He admits, in the course of a rather daring analysis of the objective-seeming *Shame* as "a nightmare in the mind of a silent God," that there can be no "absolute evidence" for or against the position. Over his whole intellectual operation hover two major philosophical spirits: Rudolf Arnheim, who argued in *Visual Thinking* that *all* thinking is ultimately visual—so that, in Kawin's terms, certain directors have simply decided to think visibly on film; and Wittgenstein, a rather grimmer spirit suggesting that we could never tell for sure and that it does not matter. (And also that the eye is a limit of, not part of, the visual field—yet we can detect its presence from the nature of that field.) Such proof as the case is capable of, then, comes from the richness of the analyses that result from Kawin's assumptions. His desire to write in a vital, wry style leads him into an occasional bantering tone: even before Bergman's trilogy, he writes, "God was no prize." But there are very minor and forgivable excesses, perhaps even endearing, like Kawin's confessions of attachment to films (including *Muriel*) that many people would hesitate to defend so strongly. Overall, *Mindscreen* is one of the most thought-provoking film books of recent years.

—ERNEST CALLENBACH

STORYTELLING & MYTHMAKING

By Frank McConnell. New York: Oxford, 1979. $13.95 cloth.

In a broad sense, McConnell adapts a design of archetypal criticism enunciated by Northrop Frye (the lawgiver) in *Anatomy of Criticism*, but where Frye posited a seasonal, mythic quaternary [Comedy (Spring), Romance, (Summer), Tragedy (Fall), Satire (Winter)], McConnell turns to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract*.

Rousseau establishes four sets of relationships between individual and state, and from this series of covenants, *Storytelling & Mythmaking* extrapolates a cyclic succession of structural patterns, each defining a dimension of civic order.

I. Fundamental political law, the state's rationale for existence: the epic world.
II. Relations among members to one another and to the state: romance.
III. Criminal law: melodrama.
IV. Morals, customs, public opinion: satire.

In McConnell's measure, such an arrangement serves both to cross-cut archetypal overlays during any historical stage (for all laws are ever at play) and to suggest a

defense of first-person cinema, voice-over and all. The study operates, incidentally, entirely within the realm of narrative film, despite occasional allusions to experimental work and the fact that, as Kawin duly notes, experimental films are normally mindscreens in their entirety.

Kawin has an appealingly lively style and an open enthusiasm for films, which is rare among people with serious theoretical interests. His analysis is necessarily complex, but it is always highly readable. By using the term "mindscreen" he postulates an interaction between film and viewer such that the viewer "reads" the film as, so to speak, visual thinking—and fantasizes a "thinker" for it, who may or (more usually) may not be identical with the known director of the film. Indeed, mindscreen films at their ultimate—*Man with the Movie Camera, Marienbad, Persona*—give the impression of narrating themselves. Kawin, who is a bold sort, goes so far as to say that such films manifest "the self-conscious mind of the work itself." He cites some scientific phenomena which make this notion less epistemologically weird than it first sounds, and he marshals many films in his argument. His basic notion can perhaps best be grasped by comparing *Rashomon* and *Marienbad*. For Kawin, *Rashomon* is composed of a number of mindscreen sections within its framing materials, but its overall structure leads us to wonder "what really happened"; with *Marienbad*, however, the film *is* "what happens."

After a preliminary lightning survey of early film narrative technique, and a few bows in the direction of Lacan and Metz, Kawin sets out to show how this notion can produce useful understandings of what are usually considered difficult films. He begins with those two masterpieces of reflexive cinema, *Sherlock Jr.* and *Citizen Kane*—to which he adds *Hair-Raising Hare*, a remarkable Bugs Bunny cartoon. The argument grows in complexity as he then defends Milton Moses Ginsberg's *Coming Apart* through an intricate and (I found) lucid analysis. This ugly and unpleasant but relentlessly rigorous film about a psychiatrist who (through a hidden camera) becomes a voyeur in his own life, and is destroyed by it, illustrates for Kawin how a film may be purely first-person but *not* a mindscreen. And thus he comes to *Marienbad*, that central modern work, from which the best of Bergman and Godard follows. Kawin finds the retrospective mindscreens incorporated in *Wild Strawberries* unsuccessfully "theatrical," but *Persona* seems to be the ultimate mindscreen film, practically inventing cinema for itself—an awesomely sophisticated and finished work. By contrast, Godard is full of rough edges, signs of visible struggle between the director and the film process; Godard manages to provide his self-consciousness a first-person voice within the narrative structure (perhaps, Kawin feels, most successfully in *Two or Three Things*, though the Godard-Gorin *Tout va bien* has more striking devices within it).

The question is, of course, whether Kawin is anthropomorphizing films through his mindscreen analyses. He admits, in the course of a rather daring analysis of the objective-seeming *Shame* as "a nightmare in the mind of a silent God," that there can be no "absolute evidence" for or against the position. Over his whole intellectual operation hover two major philosophical spirits: Rudolf Arnheim, who argued in *Visual Thinking* that *all* thinking is ultimately visual—so that, in Kawin's terms, certain directors have simply decided to think visibly on film; and Wittgenstein, a rather grimmer spirit suggesting that we could never tell for sure and that it does not matter. (And also that the eye is a limit of, not part of, the visual field—yet we can detect its presence from the nature of that field.) Such proof as the case is capable of, then, comes from the richness of the analyses that result from Kawin's assumptions. His desire to write in a vital, wry style leads him into an occasional bantering tone: even before Bergman's trilogy, he writes, "God was no prize." But there are very minor and forgivable excesses, perhaps even endearing, like Kawin's confessions of attachment to films (including *Muriel*) that many people would hesitate to defend so strongly. Overall, *Mindscreen* is one of the most thought-provoking film books of recent years.

—ERNEST CALLENBACH

STORYTELLING & MYTHMAKING

By Frank McConnell. New York: Oxford, 1979. $13.95 cloth.

In a broad sense, McConnell adapts a design of archetypal criticism enunciated by Northrop Frye (the lawgiver) in *Anatomy of Criticism*, but where Frye posited a seasonal, mythic quaternary [Comedy (Spring), Romance, (Summer), Tragedy (Fall), Satire (Winter)], McConnell turns to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract*.

Rousseau establishes four sets of relationships between individual and state, and from this series of covenants, *Storytelling & Mythmaking* extrapolates a cyclic succession of structural patterns, each defining a dimension of civic order.

I. Fundamental political law, the state's rationale for existence: the epic world.
II. Relations among members to one another and to the state: romance.
III. Criminal law: melodrama.
IV. Morals, customs, public opinion: satire.

In McConnell's measure, such an arrangement serves both to cross-cut archetypal overlays during any historical stage (for all laws are ever at play) and to suggest a

kind of progression wherein acts of founding, civilizing, deterioration and rejection link end-to-end, so that the last social disintegration provides seeds for a new birth, one that interiorizes heroism through defeat.

Each storytelling mode provides a basis for discussion of both literary and film works. These serve not necessarily to historicize (although the literature does a good part of that), but to articulate social-political value systems that characterize the dramatic or comic circumstances of each successive genre. Thus:

Epic denotes beginnings and foundings, first with warrior deities *(Iliad)*, then a law-giver *(Exodus)*. Secondarily, epic builds a civilization on its hard-fought roots *(Beowolf, Man of Aran)*. In final stages, epic achieves self-consciousness *(Aeneid, Ivan the Terrible)*.

Romance separates the knight from his royal mentor generationally, confronting him with issues of civility (Grail stories, *Tristan and Isolde, The Prisoner of Zenda, Red River)*. As the warrior finds himself more enmeshed in conflicting allegiances, his utility becomes the more problematic *(The Song of Roland, Lawrence of Arabia, Patton)*.

In the world of *melodrama*, the polis, now the city, fragments too drastically to sustain coherent systems of fealty. A protagonist must either impose his own conciliated justice (*The Golden Bowl*, the English detective or American private eye), or simply survive (the aging gunfighter, *North by Northwest*) or go under (*film noir*, "Metamorphosis," *Taxi Driver*).

When the hero must turn to visions of past or future for ethic stability, to adopt self-protecting postures of antic defense, he becomes the *satirist*, whether god's fool (Perceval) or a comic mask *(Gargantua* and *Pantagruel, Duck Soup, Gulliver's Travels, The Graduate, Satyricon)*.

So cursory a rendition of the book's scheme threatens distortion of a carefully elaborated order. The strength of McConnell's design rests in its capacity to establish a pattern of shifting value-laden modalities that may serve not only to accommodate unlike materials—*Gulliver's Travels* and *King Kong* are an uncommon double feature—but also to facilitate rewarding reconsiderations of both works.

The soft underbelly of mythic criticism such as Mcconnell's rests in its vulnerability to suspicions that the author has devised an idiosyncratic technique to indulge incompatible pleasures. In truth, McConnell writes so gracefully and with such enthusiasm that his discussion of particular works is sometimes inclined to becloud their placement in his mythic constellation: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* or *Cool Hand Luke*, for example, in the world of satire. Perhaps the generic nomenclature skews one's sense of fitness. Certainly these films, like others cited (*Rules of the Game, Annie Hall, City Lights*, and Martin and Lewis's *Living It Up*) do operate comfortably within a domain of morals, customs, public opinion. More important, McConnell sometimes turns to seminal works not for their overall narrative but as a source of significant individual images, *viz.* his book's subtitle. Thus the *Illiad* serves not only to exemplify epic, but as a source for Thersites, Agamemnon's one-time fool, and for Hephaestus, an Olympian counterpart.

In final analysis, McConnell's argument throws the gauntlet to readers with sensibilities ultimately based on distinctions, not necessarily between prose and screen but tastes which separate different qualities of experience. When the author writes (p. 15), "I think I can, without a blush, speak of *City of God* and Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* as analogous fictions, analogous stories, for both reclaim, from their respective traditions of mythmaking, the possibility of an internalized heroism, a sacrificial heroism-through-defeat, that revises the intolerable public life of their time into a paradigm of survival and triumph," he either has a reader's support or it is lost forever. In point of fact, McConnell carries premises of archetypal criticism to a consistent extension.

Two minor quibbles: in the penultimate sequence of *Rules of the Game*, Schumacher (p. 242) does not mistake Jurieu for Marceau, who is at his side, but for Octave. And Oxford's recomposition of movie stills in the book's last section, "Images and Archetypes," works against McConnell's purposes: for example, the famous moment when Ivan beholds masses come from Moscow to call him back. A full screen would pick up a crown icon motif with the peaked aperture adjacent to Ivan's head (cropped on p. 262). An echoing dome shape on lower screen left is absent altogether in the book.

—JOHN L. FELL

FILM AND FICTION
The Dynamics of Exchange

By Keith Cohen. New Haven: Yale, 1979.

The logo for Keith Cohen's study of "the dynamics of exchange" between film and fiction is a Möbius strip; whether it is made with mag film or leader is unclear, but in any case it bears no images. It is itself an image of the whole, of an argument in which each "side" of the literature/film debacle is shown to flow into its "other." If the first side of this book is concerned primarily with painting and film, and the second side primarily with the "classic modern novel," then the moment when a head and tail are joined (a four-page conclusion, which is appropriately similar to the preface) can be seen to depend on a "twist" that pervades the entire work. *Film and Fiction* does not simply argue that the

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There are not, however, many "images"; Cohen prefers to discuss the influence of film itself—rather than of specific films—on the literature of the early twentieth century, and is much more precise in his analyses of *To the Lighthouse* or *Ulysses* (the best parts of his book) than he is when discussing *Marienbad* or *Intolerance.* He is a good literary critic, and has read widely and carefully in many areas. Because he can tell the difference between Ashbery and Mallarmé, for instance, or between *Madame Bovary* and *L'Education Sentimentale,* it seems to me that he has earned the right to talk about Joyce and his cohorts on the Mt. Rushmore of obvious modernism; in this respect his book is much better than, for instance, Alan Spiegel's *Fiction and the Camera Eye* (reviewed in *FQ,* Summer 77). His best visual analyses appear in an excellent chapter on Impressionism. He is also quite good at putting the reader in touch with the way the *idea* of film, as something almost entirely new, might have struck a contemporary of Lumière and Méliès, and the related newness of "the reality of industrial technology"—notably in a fine discussion of the image of the locomotive in nineteenth and twentieth century literature, in the press, in painting, and in early films (pp. 56-59).

There are, however, some serious problems with his book. Although Cohen is current on French and British theory—the work of Derrida, Metz, Genette, *Screen,* etc. has been carefully digested and is well paraphrased —he shows an astonishing and crippling ignorance of American film criticism, especially in the very field he addresses. He cites only the lamest and most out-of-date American critics (e.g., Murray) and has written in ignorance of John Fell's *Film and the Narrative Tradition,* my own *Telling It Again and Again,* Frank McConnell's *The Spoken Seen,* and almost every other relevant work of value written since 1972. This is particularly unsettling because those books overlap his own in a mind-boggling number of instances. This is not a question of plagiarism but of scholarly and critical negligence; the best light in which I can put it is to observe that several good minds confronting the same canon and history are liable to notice many of the same things and draw many of the same conclusions. Cohen and Fell analyze the same rare Degas, the same scene from *Bovary,* etc., as Cohen and I seize on the same lecture by Gertrude Stein, etc. Though Cohen might have felt justified in choosing to work in such an independent manner, Yale University Press must be chided for failing to direct him to the overlapping work in the field; I take this as another example of the lack of seriousness with which many presses take film study.

Although Cohen's work is thus in many respects inadvertently unoriginal (and in its analyses of Joyce, etc., far better than the competition), in its thesis it differs from much other work. He and Fell, for instance, are on opposite sides of the vital question of whether cinematic fiction grew out of nineteenth-century narrative developments or out of the example of cinema (Cohen argues the latter), and to read both books is to have a good base from which to consider the question. I find myself in absolute disagreement with Cohen on the question of first-person narration in film, which he rules out of existence on p. 71 and about which I recently wrote a whole book.

It is not, I think, nitpicking to note that Cohen fails to deal with relevant books like Aaron Scharff's *Art and Photography,* that his index rarely refers to the copious footnotes that carry on a large portion of his argument, and that there are avoidable errors in some of his film citations. Some of the film titles are wrong (*October* for *Potemkin* on p. 181 is the most glaring), the Kuleshov experiment includes some previously unheard-of countershots (p. 91), and so on. This is, in short, a book that urgently needed to have been rewritten and updated before it was published, but that still has much to recommend it.

—BRUCE KAWIN

CALIGARI'S CHILDREN
The Film as Tale of Terror

By S. S. Prawer. New York: Oxford, 1980. $19.95.

Film scholarship seems periodically to give a privileged role to Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,* beginning with Siegfried Kracauer's work of filmic historiography *From Caligari to Hitler,* running through such recent essays as Noël Carroll's "The Cabinet of Dr. Kracauer" *(Millenium Film Journal),* which locates Wiene's film as a spiritual progenitor of the avant-garde. S.S. Prawer continues the critical tradition of showing how *Caligari* is inscribed in various ways within a broad sector of cinema history, although his own study focuses on the relationship of this film (and other works of the Weimar cinema) to the horror genre specifically.

Prawer's strategy may be called psycho-phenomenological in its attempt to define cinematic horror based on criteria or modes established by German Expressionism; it is because his method is so adventuresome that the book on the whole is fascinating, although it often falls apart due to Prawer's idiosyncratic taste and faulty logic. His central premise is that underneath the horror film is a fixation on what Freud termed "the uncanny"—Prawer in fact uses the title of Freud's essay as a chapter title. For Freud and Prawer this fixation is related to primeval fears and obsessions, individual and

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cultural, which have found their way into archetypal images. Prawer quotes Schelling's definition of this impulse as ". . . everything which should remain mysterious, hidden, latent and has come to light." For Prawer, *Caligari, Nosferatu, The Student of Prague* and other works of the Weimar cinema are the sources of the particular metaphysical horror he sees pervasive in the genre; the difficulty is that he deals with a number of films decidedly not of the tone set by Wiene and Murnau *(The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms)* and also other cultural sources divergent from the impulses in *Caligari (Northanger Abbey, The Man Without Qualities).* One could appreciate Prawer's attempts to find new syntheses of ideas, but then he says he is unable to accept R.H.W. Dillard's categorization of *Fellini Satyricon* as a horror film. More bothersome is his casual dismissal of Roy William Neill's baroque, Byronic film *The Black Room* in favor of a vehicle like *White Zombie,* especially curious since the Neill film reflects a continuation of the *doppelgänger* myth popular in Romanticism and the Weimar cinema.

Like most books attempting a great deal, Prawer's work is both expansive and small-minded. What he is really dealing with is not the impact of a single film so much as the origins of a genre in a variety of artistic schools, particularly German and English Romanticism, a point Prawer himself raises but not in a way to make it cohere well with the rather rigid thesis he has set for himself. Also problematic is the amount of time he allots to films attractive to him, including Mamoulian's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and Fisher's *Dracula—Prince of Darkness,* while the pivotal works of the Universal and Hammer corpus are underanalyzed. Where Prawer is strong is in his suggestions of how *Caligari* and Expressionism affected conceptions of horror throughout the genre in using imagery to exteriorize psychological states. He is ingenious in dealing with phallic obsessions in *Creature from the Black Lagoon* and the fear of hospital surgery implicit in the fish-eye lens of John Frankenheimer's *Seconds.* Of greater interest is the detailed account of *Caligari*'s specific iconographic impact on the horror film, including Whale's use of sets and costuming and Karloff's make-up for Frankenstein; the prevalence of the master-and-man construct in numerous vampire and zombie films; Vincent Price's Conrad Veidt-style whiteface for Corman's *House of Usher.* Prawer spends a chapter or two making his point about *Caligari* in a persuasive way, then begins new digressions. It is perhaps the discursive nature of his prose, as labyrinthine as a Riemann backdrop, that often allows for Prawer's many flashes of insight. Among his more interesting points are the positions of actors and actresses given an "aura" (Walter Benjamin's term) by virtue of their association with the horror film; Barbara Steele is recognized as enchantress/vampire in Fellini's *8½* just as Christopher Lee's presence in any film suggests an ominous aspect beyond his imposing physical characteristics. Certainly typecasting has existed for numerous actors, but the effect of the horror film on an actor's career is indeed worthy of contemplation. Attendant to this idea is Prawer's notion of how the horror genre is self-regenerative and tends to create new bridges and inflections among themes. Again, this can be said for all genre art although Prawer offers good insight to the relationship between, for example, *The Exorcist* (and the demonic possession cycle overall) and films of psychological terror dating to *Caligari.*

Prawer's book is obviously a significant contribution, particularly given the dearth of serious genre scholarship in the last decade—the best companion piece for this work may be David Pirie's *A Heritage of Horror.* The pitfalls and digressions of this new book may themselves be areas for future investigation, and Prawer has certainly offered enough new perspectives to clear the way for monographs rather than survey studies.

—CHRISTOPHER SHARRETT

TWO NATIONAL CINEMA SURVEYS

The Contemporary Greek Cinema by Mel Schuster. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1979.

History Must Answer to Man by Graham Petrie. Corvina Books, Gyoma, Hungary, 1978. Available from: Kultura, H-1389 Budapest 62, P.O.B. 149, Hungary. Price unknown.

Not every cinema book merits a review, but they often deserve to be reviewed in order to prevent their being mistaken as authoritative studies, reference works, or critical analyses. Mel Schuster's *The Contemporary Greek Cinema* is none of the above; written in a journalistic style, accented by Varietese, the book is a record of Schuster's own odyssey through the Greek film world: a compendium of impressions, interviews, unqualified enthusiasms, and a collection of critical notes about the films themselves which are not imperceptive, not uninteresting, but couched in carefree English and full of careless errors. "*Aldevaran* ranks high on the debit side of the lyric ledger" is, for example, meaningless when discussing Andreas Thomopoulos's anomalous lyricism.

The publishers must bear their share of the blame, for they present this work as a sober blue hardback worthy of library shelves, and the title—the only such book on the market to make such a claim—guarantees it shelf space. Thus, they have done both Schuster and libraries a disservice: in the first instance, because they should have edited the manuscript or insisted that Schuster do so; in the second, because the publication of one work on the subject may inhibit further publication and/or purchase of better works on the subject.

The Contemporary Greek Cinema is most interesting

cultural, which have found their way into archetypal images. Prawer quotes Schelling's definition of this impulse as ". . . everything which should remain mysterious, hidden, latent and has come to light." For Prawer, *Caligari, Nosferatu, The Student of Prague* and other works of the Weimar cinema are the sources of the particular metaphysical horror he sees pervasive in the genre; the difficulty is that he deals with a number of films decidedly not of the tone set by Wiene and Murnau *(The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms)* and also other cultural sources divergent from the impulses in *Caligari (Northanger Abbey, The Man Without Qualities).* One could appreciate Prawer's attempts to find new syntheses of ideas, but then he says he is unable to accept R.H.W. Dillard's categorization of *Fellini Satyricon* as a horror film. More bothersome is his casual dismissal of Roy William Neill's baroque, Byronic film *The Black Room* in favor of a vehicle like *White Zombie,* especially curious since the Neill film reflects a continuation of the *doppelgänger* myth popular in Romanticism and the Weimar cinema.

Like most books attempting a great deal, Prawer's work is both expansive and small-minded. What he is really dealing with is not the impact of a single film so much as the origins of a genre in a variety of artistic schools, particularly German and English Romanticism, a point Prawer himself raises but not in a way to make it cohere well with the rather rigid thesis he has set for himself. Also problematic is the amount of time he allots to films attractive to him, including Mamoulian's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and Fisher's *Dracula—Prince of Darkness,* while the pivotal works of the Universal and Hammer corpus are underanalyzed. Where Prawer is strong is in his suggestions of how *Caligari* and Expressionism affected conceptions of horror throughout the genre in using imagery to exteriorize psychological states. He is ingenious in dealing with phallic obsessions in *Creature from the Black Lagoon* and the fear of hospital surgery implicit in the fish-eye lens of John Frankenheimer's *Seconds.* Of greater interest is the detailed account of *Caligari*'s specific iconographic impact on the horror film, including Whale's use of sets and costuming and Karloff's make-up for Frankenstein; the prevalence of the master-and-man construct in numerous vampire and zombie films; Vincent Price's Conrad Veidt-style whiteface for Corman's *House of Usher.* Prawer spends a chapter or two making his point about *Caligari* in a persuasive way, then begins new digressions. It is perhaps the discursive nature of his prose, as labyrinthine as a Riemann backdrop, that often allows for Prawer's many flashes of insight. Among his more interesting points are the positions of actors and actresses given an "aura" (Walter Benjamin's term) by virtue of their association with the horror film; Barbara Steele is recognized as enchantress/vampire in Fellini's *8½* just as Christopher Lee's presence in any film suggests an ominous aspect beyond his imposing physical characteristics. Certainly typecasting has existed for numerous actors, but the effect of the horror film on an actor's career is indeed worthy of contemplation. Attendant to this idea is Prawer's notion of how the horror genre is self-regenerative and tends to create new bridges and inflections among themes. Again, this can be said for all genre art although Prawer offers good insight to the relationship between, for example, *The Exorcist* (and the demonic possession cycle overall) and films of psychological terror dating to *Caligari.*

Prawer's book is obviously a significant contribution, particularly given the dearth of serious genre scholarship in the last decade—the best companion piece for this work may be David Pirie's *A Heritage of Horror.* The pitfalls and digressions of this new book may themselves be areas for future investigation, and Prawer has certainly offered enough new perspectives to clear the way for monographs rather than survey studies.

—CHRISTOPHER SHARRETT

TWO NATIONAL CINEMA SURVEYS

The Contemporary Greek Cinema by Mel Schuster. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1979.

History Must Answer to Man by Graham Petrie. Corvina Books, Gyoma, Hungary, 1978. Available from: Kultura, H-1389 Budapest 62, P.O.B. 149, Hungary. Price unknown.

Not every cinema book merits a review, but they often deserve to be reviewed in order to prevent their being mistaken as authoritative studies, reference works, or critical analyses. Mel Schuster's *The Contemporary Greek Cinema* is none of the above; written in a journalistic style, accented by Varietese, the book is a record of Schuster's own odyssey through the Greek film world: a compendium of impressions, interviews, unqualified enthusiasms, and a collection of critical notes about the films themselves which are not imperceptive, not uninteresting, but couched in carefree English and full of careless errors. "*Aldevaran* ranks high on the debit side of the lyric ledger" is, for example, meaningless when discussing Andreas Thomopoulos's anomalous lyricism.

The publishers must bear their share of the blame, for they present this work as a sober blue hardback worthy of library shelves, and the title—the only such book on the market to make such a claim—guarantees it shelf space. Thus, they have done both Schuster and libraries a disservice: in the first instance, because they should have edited the manuscript or insisted that Schuster do so; in the second, because the publication of one work on the subject may inhibit further publication and/or purchase of better works on the subject.

The Contemporary Greek Cinema is most interesting

when Schuster analyses the way the Greek temperament and internecine politics affect Greek film-makers. He points out that the junta cannot be solely credited (or blamed) for the obsession with politics, and that the point of view "everything is political" is a euphemism for finding one's position on a pro- or anti-authoritarian scale. The film-makers who appear least political are less inclined to resist authority, simply because they are privately more anarchistic and less subject to the dictates of authority, or to the social pressure to conform. In a country as small and umbilocentric as Greece, which bears the burden of having cradled Western Civilization but has been an independent nation a mere 150 years, film-makers are bound to be concerned with all apparitions of colonialism and the colonialized mentality within. Schuster seems fully aware of the dilemma of such game-playing on such a small court. He observes that Voulgaris is universally liked or that Panayotopoulos is "punished" for being a loner. But despite his sound instincts about Greek society, he has failed to show in a concrete way how his psychoanalysis of the film-makers is reflected in or ultimately affects their films.

Maybe it's too soon to tell, for as he hastens to add, there is not yet an established way to make a film in Greece. While the film-makers search around to define and establish their "Greekness" over and against the Zorba image imposed upon them by foreigners and non-Greek Greeks like Jules Dassin and Michael Cacoyannis (who, because he's a Cypriot, is not a Greek??) they become more insulated, isolated, and incapable of seeing themselves within the context of world cinema. Such are the claims that would make Schuster's experiences within the Greek film world a valuable basis for a critique of Greek cinema, if he did not feel compelled to "do justice" to every Greek who ever made a film. For example, there are countless photos of the film-makers on location, which look like all such photos of "work in progress." Far more effective would have been stills reflecting the repetitive themes and images of Greek cinema.

It might be unkind to expect everyone writing on Greek cinema to have some knowledge of the language, but it would have obviated some sloppy mistakes in this book: the hero of the Greek shadow puppet plays is "Karaghiozis"; Angelopoulos's first name is transliterated "Theodoros"; and so on. Simple words are inconsistently transliterated, confusing the more knowledgable philhellene or even the observant cineaste, who, if he can't say it in Greek, says it in Latin. Thus, upon coming across a film title, *Lacrimae Rerun*, we don't know if this is a pun or merely one of a plethora of less than tragic flaws.

Had Schuster done a monograph for the BFI on one or two things he knows about Greek film-making, he would have written about Major Greek Film-makers (Angelopoulos, Panayatopoulos, Sfikas, Tassios, and Voulgaris, in this author's opinion) or the Thessaloniki Film Festival, and their editors would have kept him from speculating, in all senses of that word, on Greek cinema.

If one were to seek a model for a book about a national cinema, Graham Petrie's book about the Hungarian cinema would be exemplary. *History Must Answer to Man* has everything to recommend it but its title. Petrie's short introduction and history advises us that all elements so admired in Hungarian directors of the last decade were present in its earliest films. He shows the geneological line connecting *Somewhere in Europe* by Géza Radványi (1947), an unacknowledged classic like unto the best of Italian neorealism, with Karoly Makk's *The Fanatics* (1961) and *The Soil Under Your Feet* by Frigyes Ban (1948). Class conflict was built into the foundation of Hungarian cinema, so that the new generation of film-makers of the early sixties were content to base their work on traditional film-making (unlike their Nouvelle Vague counterparts) and took it for granted that their role as artists was to analyze their society.

This renaissance is associated with a group of directors who had graduated from the Academy for Theatre and

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SUMMER 1980

ONE DOLLAR

Syberberg's *Hitler*: An Interview with the Director

Thomas Albright: Musil's Masterpiece

Irene Oppenheim on Kosinski

Julius Novick: The Met's Mahagonny

Frances Ferguson on Soap Operas

Art Reviews of Cruikshank and Teraoka

Laura Leivick: Ballet's Bodies

Short Story by Nancy Huddleston Packer

Subscriptions: $4/year, $7/two years. Send name, address, and prepayment to The Threepenny Review, P.O. Box 335, Berkeley, CA 94701.

Cinematography in the late fifties and worked together at the Béla Balázs studio, which had been established in 1958 to produce experimental low-budget films, free from the bureaucratic pressure of making "serious" films. To three of these film-makers Petrie devotes 150 pages of meticulous criticism.

A chapter about Miklós Jancsó traces the symbolism and imagery in his films to show the development of an increasingly subtle, integrated, and meaningful style. Refuting the charges that Jancsó has become more formalistic and obscure, Petrie argues that form is the narrative and, through an analysis of that form, proves that the stylization and ritual enactment of the narrative penetrate to the essence of Jancsó's theme: "the nature of despotic control over the minds and bodies of its victims, and the problems faced by any liberator whose first task is to free those he wishes to rescue from their own worst instincts, their sloth and their cowardice." The same might be said for Petrie's task here; much of the harsh criticism of these films in the West arises from critics merely *recognizing* the characteristics of Jancsó's work instead of *perceiving* their transformations: how those circling horsemen develop into the contours of the landscape; that military and church uniforms are indeed offset by white-shirted peasants, but also that the latter develop into uniforms as well, dictating class allegiance and habits of obedience associated with uniforms; that as violence, cruelty and death become more stylized and abstract, we are being asked to see not Jancsó's cold-blooded detachment but rather how commonplace cruelty is, how definitive death. One's allies and enemies and one's mode of death give life meaning.

"The earlier films study the mechanics of oppression, present the annihilation of the victims, and allow us the satisfaction only of a sense of indignation and the knowledge that the victory and the defeat are merely temporary. In recent years Jancsó has shown himself more concerned with charting the successful struggle of the revolution and . . . decides that too many scruples, too much soul-searching and too ardent a desire to see all sides of the question can have a paralysing and numbing effect on the will." Petrie not only substantiates this, but also illuminates how some of the irritating aspects do, in fact, fit in: the high-angle shots in *Round-Up* encourage us to view the patterns as a game of chess and to be alert to the strategies of power; the red helicopter at the end of *Elektreia* is *not* an anachronism in a synchronic, mythopoeic world. Their similar themes and imagery do not make these films redundant; a shift in thinking has led Jancsó to a more overt espousal of revolution and to be less obsessed with a chronicling of repressive mechanism than with a search for freedom.

The mosaic patterns of Istvan Szabó's films are less demanding, and the criticism accordingly less gruelling. Petrie is particularly good when discussing the way Szabó manipulates past and present, memory and perception, fantasy and naturalism. Change and time would seem to separate people, no matter how close their real or imaginary ties. The distortions of memory provide a subject matter for Szabó's first films which becomes universalized into a parable in *Budapest Tales* of how history itself can be reconstructed around a set of personal symbols and, perhaps, pseudo-memories. Petrie is very sensitive to the gentle humor and ironic sophistication in Szabó's versions of Budapest life.

Istvan Gaál, on the other hand, speaks for rural Hungary, for its moral values and necessary compromises. As the conscience of the national cinema, Gaál's characters are average country folk faced with the conflict between past and present as political changes introduce things like land reform and as a pervasive authoritarianism assumes that ordinary people are incompetent to make any decisions at all for themselves. Petrie shows how the complexity of their moral dilemmas is reflected in the technological brilliance of Gaál's film-making, in great contrast to the elegaic simplicity of his plots. A cameraman himself, he also does all his own editing, thus justifying Petrie's investigating the artistic control Gaál exercises in every shot and cut.

The importance of this book as a piece of criticism centers around the three virtuoso directors above. But Petrie includes two chapters on "also rans" such as Kovacks, Makk, Fabri and the promising young Pál Sándor, Judith Elek, Marta Mészáros. Here his critique is more modest, limiting itself to plot and problem of a film, useful for anyone planning a Hungarian film week or preparing students on the subject. The Hungarian wave promises more ripples. —KAREN JAEHNE

ARTIFICIALLY ARRANGED SCENES
The Films of Georges Méliès

By John Frazer, with Foreword by Alberto Cavalcanti. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1979.

It is enlightening to observe the changing attitudes of successive generations of film historians and theorists to the earliest films. After the first years' audiences, where quantities of intellectuals and artists were as dazzled as were any of the spectators who wandered in out of curiosity, the prominent milestone attractions of 1903 and 1908 were already shoving aside the first films as curios and relics. The dignity of the nickelodeon was not to be sullied by recent memories of carnivals and county fairs and peepshows. By the time we reached the next probable milestone of 1914-15, there were plenty of references to films in respectable journals and serious considerations of films were published at several points around the world, a global war notwithstanding. The

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first films, when remembered with a smile, were called "primitive." In the twenties, this smile broadened with the avant-garde's discovery of Méliès, Zecca, Cohl, Feuillade and Mack Sennett; dada and surrealism borrowed generously from these lively "pioneers," most of whom were still alive. In spite of the film-makers' excitement, few writers questioned the pioneers about their motives or methods.

Sound arrived along with the first attempts at film histories, usually national histories built on received generalities brightened with exotic anecdotes. If there was any continuous line of investigation up to this time, it was the semi-academic lean towards sociology and reform, a tendency that had emerged before the turn of the century, when morals and eyesight were already at stake. When historical attitudes and genuine film histories (still stubbornly nationalistic) appeared, from the perspective of the thirties, they were supported by interviews with survivors as well as the discovery that the film had always been accompanied by a special press full of unguarded information. The "trade press" is still an unexhausted treasure. The work of of Lewis Jacobs in this period (published in 1939) on Méliès, Porter and Griffith is exceptional.

The next landmark in film histories was the consolidation of national film archives, both private and government, and their formation of an international organization (FIAF) to facilitate exchange and world-wide inspection of everyone's history. At last we had something more tangible than memories—the films themselves.

World War II may be responsible for a consuming concern with films in the present, including developments in film expansion and an amazingly uncritical satisfaction with what had been written about the film past. Georges Sadoul was one of the very few who went on digging, internationally and in time; his pursuit of the Lumières and his unveiling of "the Brighton School" are still valuable sources. Yet we had to pass through another vague and dismissive period before our earliest films could get the attention they had always deserved. Now there are fewer films surviving to examine, which to some writers seems a blessing.

Take, for example, the changing fortunes of Georges Méliès and his films. John Frazer's new book gives us a heart-rending account of the end of Star Films as a film producer, which partly accounts for the awful loss of so many Méliès films. But between that end and today there are other reasons, other guilts. Frazer's chronology also fills in the grim period leading to the little shop in the Gare Montparnasse. His discovery there by Clair, Auriol and Gilson must have seemed to Méliès a miracle, but the miracle did not lead to a return to film production—or to any serious discussion of him as a film-maker. He wrote memoirs to entertain his discoverers, other people made films about him, enough of his films turned up "by chance" to organize a retrospective in 1929, he was awarded the Legion of Honor in 1931. But the writing about the *charming, quaint, fantastic, pioneer* films did not change its character fundamentally. Méliès was visited and interviewed at the Orly home for retired film people (Iris Barry, who saw him there in 1936, was responsible for introducing a group of his films to a new American audience.) His death in 1938 was followed by the same sort of "appreciative" appraisal. Beyond "appreciation," with a strong accent on charm, there was little attempt, either in or out of France, to weigh his accomplishment or to establish his position in history until the *Histoire comparée du cinéma* by Jacques Deslandes and Jacques Richard (1963, 68) and the biography by his conscientious granddaughter Madeleine Malthête-Méliès in 1973. The pioneering English biography is Paul Hammond's *Marvellous Méliès* (1974). It has remained for John Frazer to fix his place in world film history and to establish the exact state of the surviving films—and to garner as much information as possible on the content of the major lost films.

Frazer faces the present state of the Méliès films and of Méliès scholarship with a welcome defiance of tradition and a completeness of information. "It was the guiding intention of the present volume to look again at the artistic evidence, the films, and to provide a careful analysis of Méliès's accomplishments based primarily on those films that have survived." He is not distracted by the enormous difference between the quantity produced and the relatively few that remain: 137 films at present count, as compared with the more than 1600 titles (actually *scenes*) of the Méliès catalogue. Part III, "The Films of Georges Méliès," begins on a bluntly presented tragic note: "1896 Seventy-eight Films [produced], Two Extant." You learn that there are two known copies of No. 26, *Une nuit terrible*, 15 seconds. Frazer begins his destruction of a legend (that Méliès films cannot be adequately described) with an accurate synopsis; production details are provided, and the entry ends with a restrained and useful "Comment." Six copies are recorded for No. 70, well known as "The Vanishing Lady." Of 1897's fifty-two films, three are extant. And so on: the depression of this continuing bad news is offset by the concreteness of the information—and the hope that the several accidental discoveries of forgotten caches of the films will not cease. And that John Frazer will be called in to identify and add them to his basic census.

Alongside his hard work Frazer has been sensitive to the humor and grace of the Méliès films. Here is part of his synopsis of *Les 400 Farces du Diable*, 1906 (incidentally, the first film seen by Eisenstein):

> ". . . The train leaves the dining room as the servants turn into devils and Satan reappears. The train is now traveling

through the Alps while people watch from nearby roofs. A trestle bridge collapses beneath the train. The locomotive and one coach are saved, allowing the voyage to continue in more compact form. The travelers arrive in front of an inn in a small Italian village, where they descend and are welcomed by the hotel chef. The train turns back into trunks which are carried off by the servants. After the travelers enter the hotel, the cook becomes Satan, who calls his two fiendish helpers out of a well . . ." —JAY LEYDA

THE DREAM THAT KICKS
The Prehistory and Early Years of Cinema in Britain

By Michael Chanan. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980. $32.50.

This overpriced, fascinating study is crowded with information about the nineteenth-century social and economic site on which commercial film was erected in Britain. Its argument might, I hope, be paraphrased as follows:

The character of motion pictures was shaped by a conjunction of proletarian and bourgeois idioms of popular culture, themselves reflective of class relationships embedded in historical circumstances of nineteenth-century Britain. Film's eventual form, secured by the twenties, is anticipated in earlier seductions of working-class appetites by middle-class power over production, marketing and exhibition. With occasional exceptions (William Haggar), the early film-makers themselves were petit bourgeois, and the substance of their product, the films they made as well as the conditions of reception, were increasingly inflected by moralistic, censorial, sentimentalizing, individualized (as opposed to communal), genteel dispositions. To cite a few examples, these same capacities were evidenced in the sentimentalization of the music hall (not always successful), in bourgeois realism on the proscenium stage, and in precedent middle-class forms such as the diorama and the educational bent of traveling lantern slide shows.

Chanan's argument is mounted on considerations of the movies' invention (including an excellent discussion of perception theories), a long rundown on the English music hall, thoughts about the evolution of theatrical settings, and finally observations on production and marketing strategies among the film pioneers. A penultimate chapter discusses selected films.

The method of argument is sometimes conjectural: (p. 51) "Someone like Maskelyne . . . must have been a master at it"; (p. 42) "Perhaps, then, the bourgeois knew, at least instinctively . . ."; (p. 151) ". . . an example of the kind of material that music hall would have picked up"; (p. 14) "[the popularization of science] must have helped to give science a safe and tame appearance . . ." More often, chapters are constituted with mini-essays which alternately locate material in a context of Marx or Freud, Benjamin and Comolli or Melanie Klein, Stanley Cavell. Particularly rewarding are the well-researched disquisitions on such subjects as celluloid, photography, and the music hall origins. Special attention centers on William Friese-Grenne, including previously unpublished notes pencilled just before his death in 1921. The case for Friese-Greene's early use of a celluloid film base is supported with new evidence.

Whether a reader is persuaded by *The Dream That Kicks* (its title comes from Dylan Thomas) will likely depend on the ideology through which he perceives ideology. My own sense is that many of Chanan's propositions are likely true, but hardly supported by his case, a conclusion drawn largely from the book's last major chapter, its discussion of the early movies themselves.

For so extensive an argument, the book's treatment of actual British films is minimal. Perhaps twenty are discussed in detail, twenty more cited (hundreds were produced in the period Chanan covers; 200 titles exist in the National Film Archive). Nor do the films considered always seem to substantiate earlier positions in the text. If (p. 209) "the proscenium was one of the influences which obstructed the achievement of (cinematic) illusion . . .", *A Big Swallow*, *Attack on a China Mission* and *Granma's Reading Glass* hardly support the proposition. If *Attack on a China Mission* would be incomprehensible without some accompanying live narration, its audience lacking foreknowledge (p. 280), why would the same audience know the continuities of *The Life of Charles Peace* (p. 298)? Both events were broadly covered through identical media sources. The notion that *How it Feels to be Run Over* (1900) "is unusual for its time in that it does indeed have an ending" (p. 288) is very questionable. Even limiting the field to a single genre (comedy), contradictory evidence comes easily: *Come Along, Do!* (1898), *Stocks* (1898), *Washing the Sweep* (1899), *Winning the Gloves* (1899), *The Fraudulent Beggars* (1899).

Chanan's familiarity with popular nineteenth-century British music adds welcome extension to our understanding of the culture. His disinclination to assign like attention to other contemporary popular modes is less understandable. For example, Olive Cook's *Movement in Two Dimensions* (London: Hitchinson, 1963) is a marked omission in the bibliography. At various stages of the argument, an absence of references to theatrical melodrama, too, poses questions. "The linear development of the classic narrative line which accumulates in the dominant genres of thriller, spy movie, melodrama and the like" (p. 46) implies quite inaccurately that melodrama existed outside traditions of proletarian culture. Discussions of music and silent film (pp. 310–312) give

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For so extensive an argument, the book's treatment of actual British films is minimal. Perhaps twenty are discussed in detail, twenty more cited (hundreds were produced in the period Chanan covers; 200 titles exist in the National Film Archive). Nor do the films considered always seem to substantiate earlier positions in the text. If (p. 209) "the proscenium was one of the influences which obstructed the achievement of (cinematic) illusion . . .", *A Big Swallow*, *Attack on a China Mission* and *Granma's Reading Glass* hardly support the proposition. If *Attack on a China Mission* would be incomprehensible without some accompanying live narration, its audience lacking foreknowledge (p. 280), why would the same audience know the continuities of *The Life of Charles Peace* (p. 298)? Both events were broadly covered through identical media sources. The notion that *How it Feels to be Run Over* (1900) "is unusual for its time in that it does indeed have an ending" (p. 288) is very questionable. Even limiting the field to a single genre (comedy), contradictory evidence comes easily: *Come Along, Do!* (1898), *Stocks* (1898), *Washing the Sweep* (1899), *Winning the Gloves* (1899), *The Fraudulent Beggars* (1899).

Chanan's familiarity with popular nineteenth-century British music adds welcome extension to our understanding of the culture. His disinclination to assign like attention to other contemporary popular modes is less understandable. For example, Olive Cook's *Movement in Two Dimensions* (London: Hitchinson, 1963) is a marked omission in the bibliography. At various stages of the argument, an absence of references to theatrical melodrama, too, poses questions. "The linear development of the classic narrative line which accumulates in the dominant genres of thriller, spy movie, melodrama and the like" (p. 46) implies quite inaccurately that melodrama existed outside traditions of proletarian culture. Discussions of music and silent film (pp. 310–312) give

no credence to the precedents in melodrama. The notion that a spectator cannot functionally divide his visual attention (p. 306) ignores both simultaneous playing areas in theater, which date well into the early nineteenth century, and their movie counterparts—for example, *In a Raines Hotel, The Bridal Chamber, The Abductors,* and *Blackmail,* all 1905 (but admittedly American examples).

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The musical insensitivity of the average producer or director to which Bernstein refers is one of a cluster of themes and variations that resound through the book. There are various accounts of what composing for films entails, how inspirations arise, when the right moment arrives in production to bring the composer in, how much time and independence the composer has. The other large set of concerns is the music itself in its film-narrative context—the problems, as one composer puts it, of "imposing one art form on another." Almost everyone in his chapter opines on issues raised by this "mixture of arts": whether or not film music should be noticed, whether film music is/should be worthy of concert performance, when the "mood" of the picture demands silence instead of "wall-to-wall music," whether the music should reinforce the "mood" of the visuals or "add a new dimension." The individual opinions on these matters reflect different kinds and degrees of insight about the nature of film, music, and narrative; nevertheless it is possible to find in them various underlying theoretical assumptions. For example, Henry Mancini's comment, ". . . the director's [and composer's] job is to tell a story, not to show how it got there," explaining why music should remain unobtrusive, in effect articulates the basic principle of Hollywood illusionism—that is, the materials and processes of narration are to be masked. Likewise, Aaron Copeland states with even greater clarity that music plays a major role in supplying "continuity": "The picture editor knows better than anyone else how serviceable music can be in tying together a visual medium which is, by its very nature, continually in danger of falling apart." The reader interested in such theoretical issues will find that Leonard Rosenman and especially Fred Steiner (no relation to Max) write the most coherently. Steiner actually states the need for "the formulation of a theory or philosophy of music for motion pictures. What I am suggesting is the possibility that someday the literature of film music may yield the equivalent of an Eisenstein, a Bazin. . . ."

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(which extravagantly hyped the original release of Disney's *Sleeping Beauty*) Canemaker's book is a brief animation history as well, and in addition provides welcome individual biographies on some important but seldom publicized artists in the current animation scene.

The Animated Raggedy Ann and Andy was published in conjunction with the release of the Bobbs-Merrill/ITT-backed Johnny Gruelle adaptation, the first feature directed by the Canadian-born, London-based animator/director Richard Williams (whose intriguing, highly praised short films and main title sequences and career are also discussed in the book.) Canemaker commences by describing in clear, well-organized terms the complicated process of putting together a full-length contemporary animated feature, and also provides a brief, illustrated history of animation in general and in particular of Disney-style "personality animation," emphasizing its importance in commercially geared narratives like *Raggedy Ann*. These sections provide a solid basis by which the layman can understand the often-intricate processes described and illustrated in detail in later pages.

As those familiar with the recent animation scene in the US are aware, the production of *Raggedy Ann* was eventually plagued with internal creative conflicts which allegedly negatively affected the final result. (See recent issues of Mike Barrier's *Funny World*.) In spite of the fact that the book was published by one of the film's big backers Canemaker does not completely by-pass the more controversial aspects of the creative power-plays which eventually disrupted the otherwise well-organized production. He even pulls the neat trick of getting Williams (who joined the company after both script and the over-extended musical score were set) off the artistic hook in the book's final paragraphs.

Canemaker's book is otherwise obviously geared at hyping its subject but it does so with a subtle objectivity and sense of style which elevates it far above your average PR non-book. What emerges is a thorough, well-documented picture of the complexities and pitfalls of putting together a modern independent animated feature, bruised egos and all. The book is profusely illustrated and the color reproduction is excellent.

Aljean Harmetz's *The Making of* The Wizard of Oz presents an equally in-depth picture of the production of another type of cinematic fantasy, in this case a live-action musical with all the creative clout of MGM at the height of its power behind it. What emerges is a fascinating collective portrait of the tremendous well of creative and technical talent involved at both the top and bottom of the studio system. Comments from people involved in the actual film, and from studio personnel who were at MGM during the OZ period, provide a wealth of primary and secondary details that interlock like the pieces of an intricate mosaic to form a total picture of the making of *OZ*, and thus of any of the ensuing musicals that evolved out of this period.

Oz marked a turning point in MGM history, produced as it was after the shift in studio dynasty from the

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Harmetz's work is a fine companion to the Knox volume, which documents the beginning of the end of the MGM musical's golden era. —ROSS CARE

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Belafonte, Dennis with Alvin H. Marill. *The Films of Tyrone Power.* Secaucus, NJ: Citadel, 1978. Pictures, credits, excerpts of period reviews. Power without the allegations. —J.F.

Bellamy, Ralph. *When the Smoke Hits the Fan.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1979. A collection of warm-hearted, literate anecdotes. —J.F.

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Brundidge, Harry T. *Twinkle, Twinkle, Movie Star!* New York and London: Garland, 1977. A reprint of 1930 studio-type biographical handouts on period stars. —J.F.

Canutt, Yakima. *Stunt Man: The Autobiography of Hollywood's Greatest.* New York: Walker, 1979. Canutt started in film in 1919 with Tom Mix, after a rodeo career. He provided anonymous heroics in *Stagecoach, Gone With the Wind, Mogambo* and *Ben Hur.* His perspective on productions differs from the more usual director-actor-writer-cameraman memories. —J.F.

Dody, Sanford. *Giving Up the Ghost: A Writer's Life Among the Stars.* New York: M. Evans and Co., 1980. $10.95. The autobiography of a ghost—his self-described "unnatural acts" in bringing to print the memories, fantasies, and tales of a collection of famous people. Wittily written, sometimes with anecdotes that uncannily echo the staple "human interest" of the ghostly trade. —E.C.

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Eaton, Mick, ed. *Anthropology—Reality—Cinema.* London: British Film Institute, 1979. £1.75. A pamphlet on the films of Jean Rouch (which are much more numerous than most of us realize). With some interesting biographical material. —E.C.

Ellsworth, Liz. *Frederick Wiseman: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. $24.95. Primarily shot lists for *Titicut Follies, High School, Hospital, Primate,* plus detailed synopses of the rest of Wiseman's films; bibliography.

Estrin, Allen. *The Hollywood Professionals: Frank Capra, George Cukor, Clarence Brown.* Volume 6. Cranbury, NJ: A.S. Barnes, 1980. $12.00. Thematically oriented for the most part, these director studies include full filmographies and give capsule summaries of each career. —E.C.

Faulkner, Christopher, *Jean Renoir: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G.K. Hall, 1979. $40.00. The result of a very exhaustive search through the literature, with annotations on fugitive writings by and about Renoir, plus a biographical chronicle, accounts of the production of all the films, and a guide to archive and library holdings. An excellent research guide for all further work on Renoir. —E.C.

Feldman, Seth. *Dziga Vertov: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. Biographical sketch, critical survey of Vertov's work, meticulous and full descriptions of the films, and annotated guide to writings about Vertov. —E.C.

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Bowles, Stephen. *Sidney Lumet: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979, $15.50. Biographical and critical essays, with credits, synopses, bibliography.

Delmar, Rosalind. *Joris Ivens: 50 Years of Film-making.* London: British Film Institute, 1979. $2.45, paper. Ivens is the greatest of living documentary film-makers. His most recent work, with Marceline Loridan, was a remarkable series of films on ordinary daily life in China—which "opened up" that country in a way that diplomatic contact, guided tourism, and official visitor exchanges cannot touch. But Ivens's work has covered an incredible range, from hard-line political projects made for immediate political purposes (his *Indonesia Calling* helped liberate that country from Dutch imperialist rule—and lost Ivens his Dutch citizenship for several decades) through lyrical, impressionist works like the early *Rain* and the later *Le Seine a rencontré Paris.* This 128-page book assembles a variety of documents—including Jacques Prévert's verse narration for the Seine film, interviews, articles by Ivens, the script for *A Valparaiso,* credits for all the films—and a compact biographical survey. Ivens, who is now 81, is a formidable role model for young radical film-makers, and this readable book should fascinate them. —E.C.

Eaton, Mick, ed. *Anthropology—Reality—Cinema.* London: British Film Institute, 1979. £1.75. A pamphlet on the films of Jean Rouch (which are much more numerous than most of us realize). With some interesting biographical material. —E.C.

Ellsworth, Liz. *Frederick Wiseman: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. $24.95. Primarily shot lists for *Titicut Follies, High School, Hospital, Primate,* plus detailed synopses of the rest of Wiseman's films; bibliography.

Estrin, Allen. *The Hollywood Professionals: Frank Capra, George Cukor, Clarence Brown.* Volume 6. Cranbury, NJ: A.S. Barnes, 1980. $12.00. Thematically oriented for the most part, these director studies include full filmographies and give capsule summaries of each career. —E.C.

Faulkner, Christopher, *Jean Renoir: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G.K. Hall, 1979. $40.00. The result of a very exhaustive search through the literature, with annotations on fugitive writings by and about Renoir, plus a biographical chronicle, accounts of the production of all the films, and a guide to archive and library holdings. An excellent research guide for all further work on Renoir. —E.C.

Feldman, Seth. *Dziga Vertov: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. Biographical sketch, critical survey of Vertov's work, meticulous and full descriptions of the films, and annotated guide to writings about Vertov. —E.C.

Leebron, Elizabeth and Lynn Gartley. *Walt Disney: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. $30.00. Synopses, credits, and annotated guide to writings about Disney.

Lesage, Julia. *Jean-Luc Godard: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. Synopses of films (with further political analytical material for the later works), credits, a biographical sketch, and annotated guide to writings about Godard.

McKinney, Doug. *Sam Peckinpah.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. $9.95. While not as sophisticated as the Seydor volume (see above), McKinney's study presents solid, careful analyses of the plots and themes of all of Peckinpah's films, with some occasional attention to their style. He has a particularly good chapter on *The Ballad of Cable Hogue,* which he regards as "a personal masterpiece," and defends the intelligence of all of Peckinpah's scripts—even those where the resulting films were badly chopped by the studios. —E.C.

Ott, Frederick, W. *The Films of Fritz Lang.* Secaucus, NJ: Citadel, 1979. Painstakingly researched including interviews with Lang, this first-rate study is more factual than interpretive. The biography gives special attention to the fin de siècle world of Lang's Viennese youth and to pre-World War I Montparnasse where he studied painting for a year. Ott suggests that more study might usefully attend Thea von Harbou, Lang's second wife whose collaborations probably explain as much of his German success as the weaknesses of those films. Von Harbou had previously been married to Klein-Rogge, who appeared in all her scripted Lang productions. Credits, synopses and reviews of each film often include suggested sources for visual as well as "original" story material. Especially welcome are little-seen Decla productions, such as *Der Herr der Liebe* (1919), *Das Wandernde Bild* (1920), and *Die Vier um die Frau* (1921). Ott points to similarities between Georg Kaiser's *Gas* trilogy and *Metropolis,* and documents the film's effects that were done full-scale, not miniature. Excisions from American prints are discussed. The book contains an extensive multi-language bibliography. —J.F.

Phillips, Gene D. *Ken Russell.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. $9.95. This thoughtful and fact-filled study deals with the full range of Russell's television work, and it is intriguing that Russell has always in a sense preferred TV to film—for its quickness, its lack of the heavy-industry side of film-making, its relative freedom (as he at least sees it)—and he is now again working for TV. Considering the wild variation in opinion on Russell, it's remarkable that this is the fourth book about him; and it is particularly valuable for the extensive quotes from ten years worth of letters and interviews—which, whether you like the results or loathe them, clearly set forth what Russell thinks he has been about. —E.C.

Seton, Marie. *Portrait of a Director: Satyajit Ray.* London: Dennis Dobson, 1978. Essentially a reprint of the 1971 edition. —J.F.

Silet, Charles *Lindsay Anderson.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1978. $18.00. Biographical information; critical survey; film synopses, credits and notes; annotated bibliography; other work; archival sources; distributors. —J.F.

Silver, Alain and Elizabeth Ward. *Robert Aldrich: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. $15.00. Biographical and critical notes, credits, synopses, bibliography.

Stern, Michael. *Douglas Sirk.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. $9.95. Partly on the strength of Fassbinder's endorsement of his work, there is a vogue in progress for Sirk; and Stern, like other Sirk defenders, valiantly argues that his melodramas transcend campiness and constitute a secret attack on the smug American society of their era. Like many a director who served Hollywood modestly and well, Sirk was obviously a cultured and intelligent man. But he was also capable of unabashedly awful things, and it undermines confidence in Stern's judgment when he writes, of a hilarious scene in *Written on the Wind:* "The oil wells that seem to haunt the film provide Sirk with a complex iconography. Their phallic appearance is obvious, but it reaches a terribly ironic conclusion when, at the end of the film, Marylee, the nymphomaniac, is shown with only a small model derrick to caress. Furthermore, in a slightly different sense, the oil wells represent limitless energy. . . ." And so on. (Stern also seems to share with Sirk a fatal confusion between impotence, which is the inability to have an erection, and infertility, which is the inability to sire offspring; but of course on such confusions many fifties melodramas quite satisfactorily turned.) Stern's analysis of Sirk's visual style is generally ingenious, and he carries out a detailed interpretation of Sirk's characteristic themes of impotence, blindness, decay, and the psychological rot behind the middle-class facade. —E.C.

Stirling, Monica. *A Screen of Time: A Study of Luchino Visconti.* New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1979. $14.95. This thoughtful critical study encompasses the director's opera stagings, theater productions, and anti-Fascist activities. Bibliography. —J.F.

Wexman, Virginia Wright and Gretchen Bisplinghoff. *Roman Polanski: A Guide to References and Resources.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. $15.00. Biographical essay, credits, synopses, bibliography.

Williams, Alan. *Max Ophüls and the Cinema of Desire: A Critical Study of Six Films, 1948–1955.* New York: Arno, 1980. This 164-page monograph discusses six of Ophüls's final seven films (judiciously omitting *The Reckless Moment*) after laying careful theoretical groundwork. Auteur bases on which the director has been praised are dismissed, the better to substantiate which defines style and content as different things and not as different aspects of the same thing will inevitably find the Ophüls films problematic" (p. 9). Williams establishes two kinds of elements that customarily elude plot summaries: (1) what is immediately sieved out of memory (like narrative continuities) or discarded (like throw-away dialogue) because its relation to story appears only circumstantial, and (2) events "occurring at the same time as events in the plot, but not taken to be causally related to them" (p. 39).

By such measures, distinctions are located between what a film seems to be "about" and things (sounds, repetitions of dialogue or subject-and-camera movements) that serve not so much to undermine apparent interpretations as to contribute contradictory, simultaneous information: the out-of-tune piano in *Letter from an Unknown Woman,* the contrast between Lola's physical deportment in the circus and during flashbacks. A thoughtful, interesting study. —J.F.

Yacowar, Maurice. *Loser Take All: The Comic Art of Woody Allen.* New York: Ungar, 1979. $10.95. This detailed study of how Allen's comedy works miraculously avoids the kind of scholarly stuffiness that Allen parodies so murderously; at the same time it manages to say a great deal about the comic mechanisms and recurrent patterns in Allen's art. Yacowar refrains from strident claims or rankings, but it is clear from the seriousness of his study that he believes Allen is playing in the big league where only a few of the greats (Keaton, Chaplin and probably nobody else) have really established themselves. The book includes descriptions not only of the films, but also of Allen's considerable output of drama and written pieces; it resolutely excludes biography. A sturdy defense of the seriousness of a comic who (in my opinion, anyway) has already made two masterpieces, *Love and Death* and *Annie Hall.* —E.C.

Histories

Aldgate, Anthony. Cinema and History: *British Newsreels and the Spanish Civil War.* London: Scolar Press, 1979. $24.50. Derived from an Edinburgh University dissertation, Aldgate's study first develops an argument on the utility of film as a primary source for historical study, then traces the emergence of the British newsreel during the thirties. The text's main body considers coverage of the War in fascinating detail with respect to production techniques and the current state of the newsreel companies. Filmography, bibliography. —J.F.

Barnouw, Erik and S. Krishnaswamy. *Indian Film.* New York: Oxford, 1980. $5.95, paperback. An updating of the original 1963 publication, which is still the standard Western study of Indian cinema. —E.C.

Björkman, Stig. *Film in Sweden: the New Directors.* London: Tantivy Press, 1977. Swedish film dating from Bo Widerberg, *The Prom* (1962). Features Vilgot Sjöman, Kjell Grede, Jan Troell, Jonas Cornell, Jan Haldoff, Mai Zetterling, Johann Bergenstrahle, Roy Andersson, Lasse Forsberg. —J.F.

Blitz, Marcia. *Donald Duck.* New York: Harmony Books, 1979. $12.95. This book, a companion volume to the same publisher's *Mickey Mouse: Fifty Happy Years,* will tell you all you'll ever want to know about "the world's most illustrious fowl" and the people who created him (in 1934). Subjects covered are Donald's "biography," his cartoons, full-length films, books and comic books, television series, and more. Lavishly produced and illustrated, with a filmography and a bibliography. —HARRIET POLT

Courtade, Francis. *Les Maledictions du Cinéma Français.* Paris: Eds. Alain Moreau, 1978. This important work is a history of French cinema from 1928 to 1978, examined through its crises. Relying on primary sources, Courtade outlines major economic and technological developments of French cinema within the context of social and political events. Not a critical history, the work discusses only those films which illustrate particular trends, political concerns (e.g., Popular Front films), or technological innovations. Courtade provides an invaluable introduction to French film history of the sound era (the first overview of the subject since Sadoul's 1964 *Le Film Français*), with accurate and, for the most part, well-chosen information. Some minor problems—a tendency to cite at excessive length, organizational problems in some chapters—do not detract from its usefulness. The book deserves distribution in the US and an English translation. —EVELYN EHRLICH

Cowie, Peter. *Dutch Cinema: An Illustrated History.* New York: A. S. Barnes, 1979. $12.00. Cowie does for Dutch films what he has previously done for Sweden and Finland: provides a compact, fact-filled summary of the industry's history and present practitioners. For most Americans, Dutch film means Joris Ivens and, perhaps, Fons Rademakers *(Max Havelaar);* but Dutch film people have struggled with the problems of a small country dominated by American distribution firms for many years, and a nation that produced Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Breughel may one of these days do something astonishing in film as well. —E.C.

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Deutelbaum, Marshall, ed. *"Image": On the Art and Evolution of the Film.* New York: Dover, and the International Museum of Photography, Rochester, 1979. $8.95. Photographs and articles from the magazine *Image*, which is published by Eastman House (the International Museum of Photography), including a series of interviews done by George Pratt, plus articles by James Card, Gordon Hendricks, Marshall Deutelbaum, and Pratt himself. Valuable historical material; excellent photo reproduction, as befits a phography magazine.
—E.C.

Hepworth, Thomas. *The Book of the Lantern.* New York: Arno, 1978. Reprint of an 1899 treatise on producing and exhibiting lantern slides, written by Cecil Hepworth's father. —J.F.

Hurst, Richard. *Republic Studios: Between Poverty Row and the Majors.* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1979. $13.50. Largely a business-oriented history of the company, with its B's and serials (and players, including the ill-fated Vera Hruba Ralston) receiving some rather summary attention. —E.C.

Knelman, Martin. *This is Where We Came In: On the Career and Character of Canadian Film.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977. Canadian film history from Grierson and McLaren to Snow and Jutra. —J.F.

Knight, Arthur. *The Liveliest Art: A Panoramic History of the Movies.* revised Ed. New York: Macmillan, 1978. $15.95. "The liveliest art is still lively, still evolving," writes Arthur Knight in the revised edition of his 1957 classic. And to prove it, Knight has added new chapters: on Orson Welles, "The Blacklist Years," "The Auteur Theory and a Few Others" (structuralism, semiotics, cinéma-vérité). The 1957 chapter, "The Stamp of the Studio" evolves into "The Twilight of the Major Studios," and "The Challenge of Television" disappears, as does a section on the film society movement and "art houses." Gone, too (alas) is a useful appendix on "100 Best Books on Film"—perhaps the selection has become impossible to make. More additions are the youth-oriented films of the late sixties and early seventies and, of course, current significant directors such as Lucas, Coppola, Spielberg, and others. *The Liveliest Art*, thus suitably updated, remains one of the most useful and readable surveys around. —HARRIET POLT

Low, Rachael. *The History of the British Film 1929–1939 Documentary and Educational Films of the 1930s.* London: Allen & Unwin, New York: Bowker, 1979.

_____. *The History of the British Film 1929–1939 Films of Comment and Persuasion of the 1930s.* London: Allen & Unwin. New York: Bowker, 1979. Volumes 5 and 6 of Low's monumental work concentrate on the decade's non-feature output. *Documentary and Educational Films* describes titles produced for school use and realistically assesses the film-makers' general misjudgement of the market. It proceeds through Grierson's movement, not altogether persuaded by his optimism and faith in "reality." Appendices include a history of the British Film Institute and a preliminary list of film titles with production credits. *Films of Comment and Persuasion* turns to news, travel, social persuasion (e.g., "to encourage the religious use of the film"), political propaganda *(Will Civilization Crash?, Peace or War)*, and historical documentation. Another film list follows.
—J.F.

Reader, Keith. *The Cinema: A History.* London: Hodder and Stoughton. New York: David McKay, 1979. A valiant effort to contain all feature film history in 180 pages. The challenge is to summarize careers in one or two sentences. Unexpected attention is given to Michael Curtiz. *A Trip to the Moon* is misdated as 1892 on page 6 and as 1896 in the illustration opposite page 120.
—J.F.

Shindler, Colin. *Hollywood Goes to War: Films and American Society, 1939–1952.* Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul (Cinema and Society Series), 1979. $20.00 Prepared with large slices of British wry, but not offensively so, this is a delightfully readable sociohistory of films from the end of the Spanish Civil War to the end of the Korean War: a mournful tale of folly and delusion, nobility and tears, against the real backdrops of blood, genocide, death. —E.C.

Spehr, Paul C. *The Movies Begin: Making Movies in New Jersey 1887–1920.* Newark Museum: Morgan Press, 1977. Early American film history affectionately emphasizing New Jersey. The book is noteworthy for its illustrations and for the rundowns on original studios, including their staffs and representative films: Edison, Centaur, Champion, Pathé Frères, Eclair, Victor, Kalem, Solax, World, Fox, Selznick and Select, Goldwyn, Artcraft, Triangle, Universal, Metro, and Lincoln.
—J.F.

Stanley, Robert H. *The Celluloid Empire: A History of the American Movie Industry.* New York: Hastings House, 1978. Concentrates on the development, corporate structure and management control of the major studios. Bibliography includes major court case references. —J.F.

Stearns, Marshall and Jean Stearns. *Jazz Dance: the Story of American Vernacular Dance.* New York. Shirmer, 1979. Contains a listing of films with significant jazz dance documentation. A reprint of the 1968 edition.
—J.F.

Taylor, Richard. *Film Propaganda: Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany.* New York: Barnes & Noble, 1979. $25.00. Rather elementary but nicely organized study of the historical background and of certain key films.
—E.C.

Taylor, Richard. *The Politics of the Soviet Cinema, 1917–1929.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979. $19.95. This study is filled with more historical detail (particularly of bureaucratic reshuffling) than the average film enthusiast might wish, but it is well worth reading by anyone interested in Soviet film: Taylor abundantly describes the governmental background out of which the great works of Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Dovzhenko flowered. And he provides a degree of concrete record not even equalled by Jay Leyda's *Kino.* Some of this is merely informative; some is corrective. When *Potemkin* was released, for instance, it only lasted four weeks in its first run in Moscow and was only slightly more popular than *Robin Hood,* with Douglas Fairbanks. The big hit of the time was *The Bear's Wedding,* with script by Lunacharsky, based on a Prosper Merimée story. In such circumstances, and in a country devastated beyond Western understanding by the Civil War, the tasks of the Bolshevik government seemed insuperable; it is small wonder that they spent much of their time pondering the relative revenue-producing capacities of the cinema and the vodka industry, or that cinemas eagerly advertised "American hits" while films like Dziga Vertov's *Forward, Soviet!* were delayed in release for months. A chapter on "theory and film" is devoted to Vertov, Shub, Kuleshov (whose "Americanism" introduced into Russian the phrase *Kheppi end*), Eisenstein, and the FEKS group; heavily larded with quotations, and of no great subtlety, this chapter still lays out a great deal of useful information, and, like the book as a whole, serves as a kind of monument to the excitements of the revolutionary years. Taylor's chronicle ends with the establishment of firm Party control over cinema—a control which, in the Stalin years, was to mean disaster. —E.C.

Wolf, William, with Lillian Kramer Wolf. *Landmark Films: The Cinema and Our Century.* New York & London: Paddington Press, 1979. $14.95. An interesting idea—to link a series of key films (though not just accepted classics) with the major historical events of their times. But the result is mainly a series of appreciations, a good many of them on the routine side, dealing with the films whose circumstances have already been explored in detail. Still, the compilation into one volume has value, and the book might be useful in introductory film history courses. —E.C.

Genre Studies

Beck, Calvin Thomas. *The Scream Queens: Heroines of the Horrors.* New York: Macmillan, 1978. Imperilled heroines, including unexpected material on Fort Lee, Alice Guy-Blaché, and May McAvoy (*The Terror,* 1928). -J.F.

Britton, Andrew, et al. *The American Nightmare.* Toronto: Festival of Festivals, 1979. $5.50, from Canadian Film Institute, 75 Albert St., Suite 1105, Ottawa, Ont. K1P 5E7. Essays by Robin Wood, Andrew Britton, Richard Lippe, and Tony Williams—very elegant if brief psychoanalytically oriented discussions of such films as *Sisters, Jaws, The Exorcist, Assault on Precinct 13, Night of the Living Dead.* —E.C.

Edelson, Edward. *Tough Guys and Tough Gals of the Movies.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1978. Fanzine essays on toughies from Bogart ("with the built-in curl in his lip") to Gene Hackman ("the tough-as-nails New York cop"). —J.F.

Glut, Donald F. *Classic Movie Monsters.* (Metuchen, NJ.: Scarecrow Press, 1978.) A follow-up to Glut's *The Frankenstein Legend* and *The Dracula Book,* this one covers, most thoroughly, mummies, werewolves, invisible men, King Kong, etc. in film and print, but incomprehensibly neglects such subgenres as the were-tiger film (e.g., PRC's all-but-forgotten *Tiger Fangs,* 1943) and the giant-crab movie (*Port Sinister, Attack of the Crab Monsters* and *Mysterious Island* are prominent titles in this area). Next time, perhaps.

—DON WILLIS

Haining, Peter, ed. *The Frankenstein File.* London: New English Library, 1977. Largely a fanzine anthology with many film stills, this paperback contains some rarities: Mary Shelley, "How I Created Frankenstein" (1831); "The Old Tower of Frankenstein" (*Lloyd's Weekly,* 1847); "Bringing the Dead Alive" (*The Terrific Register,* 1825); William Morrow, "The Monster Maker" (1897). —J.F.

Issari, M. Ali and Paul, Doris A. *What is Cinéma Vérité?* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1979. $10.50. A survey of *cinéma-vérité* and its antecedents, relying heavily on quotations from practitioners; raises most of the issues involved and marshals a good deal of factual background information, but is naive on the aesthetic problems (considers Flaherty used "no artificial story," etc.) and silent on structural matters. —E.C.

Jacobs, Lewis, ed. *The Documentary Tradition.* New York, Norton, 1979 (2nd ed.). Updated from 1971, Jacobs's new edition adds a 1970–1978 section (Woman's Liberation, *Hearts and Minds,* Wiseman, *Harlan County, U.S.A.*) and a selected list of period documentaries.

—J.F.

Mast, Gerald. *The Comic Mind: Comedy and the Movies,* second ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979. $7.95. Adds material on Mel Brooks and

Taylor, Richard. *The Politics of the Soviet Cinema, 1917–1929.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979. $19.95. This study is filled with more historical detail (particularly of bureaucratic reshuffling) than the average film enthusiast might wish, but it is well worth reading by anyone interested in Soviet film: Taylor abundantly describes the governmental background out of which the great works of Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Dovzhenko flowered. And he provides a degree of concrete record not even equalled by Jay Leyda's *Kino.* Some of this is merely informative; some is corrective. When *Potemkin* was released, for instance, it only lasted four weeks in its first run in Moscow and was only slightly more popular than *Robin Hood,* with Douglas Fairbanks. The big hit of the time was *The Bear's Wedding,* with script by Lunacharsky, based on a Prosper Merimée story. In such circumstances, and in a country devastated beyond Western understanding by the Civil War, the tasks of the Bolshevik government seemed insuperable; it is small wonder that they spent much of their time pondering the relative revenue-producing capacities of the cinema and the vodka industry, or that cinemas eagerly advertised "American hits" while films like Dziga Vertov's *Forward, Soviet!* were delayed in release for months. A chapter on "theory and film" is devoted to Vertov, Shub, Kuleshov (whose "Americanism" introduced into Russian the phrase *Kheppi end*), Eisenstein, and the FEKS group; heavily larded with quotations, and of no great subtlety, this chapter still lays out a great deal of useful information, and, like the book as a whole, serves as a kind of monument to the excitements of the revolutionary years. Taylor's chronicle ends with the establishment of firm Party control over cinema—a control which, in the Stalin years, was to mean disaster. —E.C.

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Britton, Andrew, et al. *The American Nightmare.* Toronto: Festival of Festivals, 1979. $5.50, from Canadian Film Institute, 75 Albert St., Suite 1105, Ottawa, Ont. K1P 5E7. Essays by Robin Wood, Andrew Britton, Richard Lippe, and Tony Williams—very elegant if brief psychoanalytically oriented discussions of such films as *Sisters, Jaws, The Exorcist, Assault on Precinct 13, Night of the Living Dead.* —E.C.

Edelson, Edward. *Tough Guys and Tough Gals of the Movies.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1978. Fanzine essays on toughies from Bogart ("with the built-in curl in his lip") to Gene Hackman ("the tough-as-nails New York cop"). —J.F.

Glut, Donald F. *Classic Movie Monsters.* (Metuchen, NJ.: Scarecrow Press, 1978.) A follow-up to Glut's *The Frankenstein Legend* and *The Dracula Book,* this one covers, most thoroughly, mummies, werewolves, invisible men, King Kong, etc. in film and print, but incomprehensibly neglects such subgenres as the were-tiger film (e.g., PRC's all-but-forgotten *Tiger Fangs,* 1943) and the giant-crab movie (*Port Sinister, Attack of the Crab Monsters* and *Mysterious Island* are prominent titles in this area). Next time, perhaps.

—DON WILLIS

Haining, Peter, ed. *The Frankenstein File.* London: New English Library, 1977. Largely a fanzine anthology with many film stills, this paperback contains some rarities: Mary Shelley, "How I Created Frankenstein" (1831); "The Old Tower of Frankenstein" (*Lloyd's Weekly,* 1847); "Bringing the Dead Alive" (*The Terrific Register,* 1825); William Morrow, "The Monster Maker" (1897). —J.F.

Issari, M. Ali and Paul, Doris A. *What is Cinéma Vérité?* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1979. $10.50. A survey of *cinéma-vérité* and its antecedents, relying heavily on quotations from practitioners; raises most of the issues involved and marshals a good deal of factual background information, but is naive on the aesthetic problems (considers Flaherty used "no artificial story," etc.) and silent on structural matters. —E.C.

Jacobs, Lewis, ed. *The Documentary Tradition.* New York, Norton, 1979 (2nd ed.). Updated from 1971, Jacobs's new edition adds a 1970–1978 section (Woman's Liberation, *Hearts and Minds,* Wiseman, *Harlan County, U.S.A.*) and a selected list of period documentaries.

—J.F.

Mast, Gerald. *The Comic Mind: Comedy and the Movies,* second ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979. $7.95. Adds material on Mel Brooks and

Woody Allen ("he may not only be the best American comic film maker of his age, but, arguably, the best American film maker of his age period") to this scholarly study of why comedy is at least as serious as other dramatic forms. —E.C.

Matthews, J.H. *Surrealism and American Feature Films.* Boston: Twayne, 1979. $9.95. I am not sure if J. H. Matthews is a card-carrying Surrealist himself. (Robert Benayoun once showed me *his* card, but of course I couldn't be sure he hadn't just printed it up all by himself.) Matthews surely ought to be; this book is a Surrealist work in several senses of the word. It has, for one thing, a solemnly devout tone, which has roots, true enough, in the Founding Documents, but which Matthews carries to his very own personal pitch, especially when he is describing (which he does constantly) what a proper Surrealist would do about this or that. "Essentially, Surrealists react positively to a movie because they approve its subject, what it tells. . . . Surrealists see no special virtue in technical ineptitude, however. . . . Surrealists worth their salt do not devote themselves to widening the gap between the real and the Surreal, but to closing it." And so on: there is a kind of dour, humorless, Salvation-Army dedication at work here, saving the world. And this is more than a little surreal, since what one would have thought to be the enemy—the orderly, do-gooding spirit of bourgeois society—seems unaccountably to have taken over the text itself, after which it proceeds to strangle Hollywood's occasional Surrealist children (the Marx Brothers, *King Kong, Peter Ibbetson, Dark Passage, Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, Night of the Hunter,* and *The Last Remake of Beau Geste)* in their critical cribs.

However, all is not lost; fortunately, Matthews gives lengthy and circumstantial accounts of the films themselves, which indeed do possess many surreal attributes that are sometimes fitfully illuminated by quotations from Surrealists. Chief among these is Ado Kyrou, author of *Amour-Erotisme et cinéma* and various other rather unselectively enthusiastic works, with whom Matthews keeps up a more or less continual dialogue throughout the book, sometimes quoting Kyrou with approval, but then sniping at him. Altogether a disconcerting work, full of contradictions, banalities, and portentousness, intermittently relieved by the nagging suspicion that Matthews may know exactly what he's doing. —E.C.

Overbey, David. *Springtime in Italy: A Reader on Neo-Realism.* Hamden, CT: The Shoe String Press, 1979. $15.00. A collection of articles and comments by the great names of neorealism, and some by names little known outside of Italy, e.g., Elio Vittorini, who is represented by an excellent essay on politics and culture.

—E.C.

Turner, George E. and Michael H. Price. *Forgotten Horrors: Early Talkie Chillers from Poverty Row.* Cranbury, NJ: A. S. Barnes, 1979. $19.95. "Obscurity . . . links the films discussed," note the authors in their preface, and it's true you can't get much more obscure than these "forgotten horrors," over 100 unknown and unsung specimens from the lowest stratum of Hollywood film-making in the thirties. It's not a particularly rich stratum. Of the 27 "horrors" from the list which I've managed to track down and actually see over the years, only *White Zombie* (1932) stands out as deserving of much individual, semi-serious attention, while another choice entry, *The Lost City* (1935)—"this affront to culture, this paean to *kitsch* . . . great entertainment"—deserves its own recognition as a landmark of camp. The authors' comments on *Murder by Television* (1935)—"a dull script, plodding direction, and poor performances"—are, unfortunately, applicable to most of the other entries too, which are for the most part virtually unwatchable "chillers" like *The Monster Walks* and *Strange Adventure* (both 1932), two film experiences which I duly regret inflicting on unsuspecting fellow fans of the genre. But Turner and Price are comprehensive—so comprehensive that I can find only one indie horror thriller from the period (roughly 1930-36) that they somehow overlooked: *Obeah* (1935), whose director, adventurer F. Herrick Herrick, was the subject of a *TV Guide* story as recently as 1973. If the authors err, it's in overextending themselves, in defining "horror" very loosely as "conveying a strange menace" and including offbeat Westerns, jungle melodramas and Oriental thrillers, in what seems an effort to pad the book out to 200 pages. (At that they missed a few "spooky Westerns" from the mid-thirties—*Vanishing Riders, Desert Phantom,* and *Last of the Warrens.*) But they do come up with a half dozen or so genuine discoveries, including *The Rogues' Tavern* (1936), *Big Calibre* (1934) and *Tombstone Canyon* (1932), the latter film featuring Sheldon Lewis as the "grotesque Phantom" with an "horrific makeup of his own creation . . ." Reading the book one might get the impression that character actor Mischa Auer was the talkies' first horror star—there are more references to him than to any other actor except (of course) Bela Lugosi. Turner and Price even manage to find a few "auteurs"—Robert N. Bradbury, Frank Strayer—and the *Meisterwerk* of Poverty Row" is for them Monogram's 1934 *Jane Eyre.* Each entry comes complete with credits, synopsis, notes and reproductions of original ads, lobby cards and posters. (The full-page ad for the 1934 *House of Mystery* is a lulu.)

—DON WILLIS

Tuska, John. *The Detective in Hollywood.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1979. Tuska discusses the popular detectives, their authors, changes in adaption from

fiction to screen, the lives and personalities of appropriate actors, writers, and directors. —J.F.

Reference Books

Adams, Les and Buck Rainey. *Shoot-em-ups: The Complete Reference Guide to Westerns of the Sound Era.* New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1978. After an expository 1903-1927 prelude, approximately 3400 Westerns are chronologically listed with release date, studio, cast, director, screenplay and producer credits. Five-to-six year periods are preceded by short essays. Title index. —J.F.

Allen, Nancy. *Film Study Collections: A Guide to Their Development and Use.* New York: Ungar, 1979. $14.00. A collection of concrete information and advice for librarians facing tricky problems in building film collections; also useful for researchers since it contains a survey of archives and their holdings—scripts, films, and printed materials. —E.C.

American Film Institute. *Guide to College Courses in Film and Television.* Princeton: Peterson's Guides, 1978. College and university programs with faculty, resources, curriculum, festivals, awards, potential employment. —J.F.

Baer, D. Richard. *The Film Buff's Checklist.* Hollywood Film Archive, 8344 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, CA 90069. $19.95. Titles, dates, studio, length, color/B&W, stars —for about 19,000 films from 1912-1979, almost all American. With ratings on a 10-point scale.

Blackaby, Linda, Dan Georgakas, and Barbara Margolis. *In Focus: A Guide to Using Films.* New York: New York Zoetrope, 1980. $9.95 paper. Even people who have been showing films in their organizations for years will learn useful things from this exceedingly detailed guide to planning, promotion, budgeting, projection, improving sound, print shipping, etc. —E.C.

Cataloging Commission, International Federation of Film Archives. *Film Cataloging.* New York: Burt Franklin & Co., 1979. $17.95. A manual of film cataloguing practices, systems, and equipment.

Cine-Aztlán. *La Raza Film Bibliography.* Santa Barbara: Cine-Aztlán, n.d. A short survey of Mexican and Latin Hollywood actors, followed by an annotated list of non-Hollywood La Raza films with sources. Subject index. —J.F.

Cinéma D'Aujourd'hui. No. 14, Automne 1979: Actualité du Cinéma Américain. Pierre Lherminier, ed. Paris: Filméditions. Articles, filmographies, bibliographies, and brief biographical/critical sketches of a sizable group of American directors and performers.

Cowie, Peter, ed. *International Film Guide 1980.* New York: A. S. Barnes, 1979. $7.95. This essential yearly guidebook to happenings in world cinema is bullish on American cinema, rising admissions everywhere, the spread of multiple-auditorium theaters. It chronicles activities in countries from Afghanistan (yes!) to Yugoslavia; there are special features on animation, films for young people, and the customary reference sections on film schools, archives, magazines, bookstores, film collecting sources, etc., and biocritical essays on Ashby, Carlsen, Tavernier, Weir, and Wenders. —E.C.

Dharap, B.V. *Indian Films 1977 & 1978.* Pune, India: Motion Picture Enterprises, 1979. Features, shorts, financial successes, awards, distribution, exhibition. In 1978, 612 Indian features were produced, in 16 languages. —J.F.

Dolmatovskaya, Galina and Shilova, Irina. *Who's Who in the Soviet Cinema.* Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978. $12.50 from Imported Publications, Inc., 320 West Ohio Street, Chicago, IL 60610. Brief biocritical notes on 35 Soviet directors and 35 performers active today—many from the smaller republics. —E.C.

Fielding, Raymond. *A Bibliography of Theses and Dissertations on the Subject of Film: 1916-1979.* Houston: University Film Association, 1979. Monograph No. 3. 1,420 dissertations—indexed by general topics, but not annotated.

Film Canadiana 1977-1978. Ottawa: Canadian Film Institute, 1978. 1977 films, feature film index 1970-77, bibliography of Canadian cinema, periodicals, books, organizations. French and English. —J.F.

Film and the Humanities. Rockefeller Foundation, 1977. Free. The report of a 1976 "Film and the Humanities" conference. Summary, selected papers, bibliographic guide. —J.F.

Films on Art: a sourcebook compiled and edited by the Canadian Centre for Films on Art for the American Federation of Arts. New York: Watson-Guptill for the Canadian Film Institute in Ottawa, 1977. $15.95. An updated, expanded version of the AFA's 1952 volume with films, credits, summaries, U.S. and Canadian distributors. —J.F.

Gadney, Alan. *Gadney's Guide to 1800 International Contests, Festivals and Grants . . .* P.O. Box 10180, Glendale, CA 91209: Festival Publications, 1979. $15.95 paperback & $21.95 cloth. Covers film, video, photography, TV, radio, writing, poetry, playwriting, journalism. Includes many specialized film festivals. The best current source of festival information. —E.C.

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Gallup Looks at the Movies. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Reserves, Inc. 1979. Beginning in March 1940, George Gallup undertook extensive research for RKO. The wartime studies include "Audit of Marquee Values," "Audience Acceptance Value of Stories," "Title Selection," "Publicity Penetration," and player ratings. Activities continued until 1953, later to include a case history of *The Jolson Story. All The King's Men.* ad test reports, "Moviegoers' Knowledge of and Attitudes to Bergman-Rossellini Publicity," and "Reactions to 3-D, Wide Screen and Stereophonic Sound." The first section was prepared as *Increasing Profits with Continuous Audience Research.* Audience Research Institute. Princeton, 1941. Available complete on four microfilm reels for $150. —J.F.

Garbicz, Adam and Klinowski, Jacek: *Cinema. the Magic Vehicle: A Guide to its Achievement.* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1979. $25.00. This volume is "Journey Two," following a volume of the same title which covered film through 1949; this one deals with the fifties. Credits (especially accurate) and brief, sensible critical essays for 138 films. —E.C.

Horkheimer, Mary Foley and John C. Diffor, Ed. *Educator's Guide to Free Films.* Randolph, WI: Educators Progress Service, Inc., 1979. (39th edition).

International Federation of Film Archives. *Bibliography: FIAF Members Publications 1978.* Ottawa: Canadian Film Archives, 1979. $6.85. Archive addresses, FIAF members and their publications. —J.F.

Kemp's International Film and Television Yearbook 1979–1980. London. The Kemp's Group, 1979. Like its 1978–79 predecessor, lists equipment sources, mobile units, studio installations, associations, casting, costumes, production and post-production services. —J.F.

Keylin, Arleen and Suri Fleischer. *Hollywood Album: The Lives and Deaths of Hollywood Stars from the Pages of the New York Times.* New York: Arno, 1977. $18.

Klotman, Phyllis Rauch. *Frame By Frame—a Black Filmography.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979. Credits, distributor, archive, critical synopses (where possible) of 3000 films. Subject encompasses both the United States and black Third World. —J.F.

Lauritzen, Einer and Gunnar Lauritzen. *American Film Index 1908–1915: Motion Pictures, July 1908–Dec. 1915.* Stockholm: Film Index, 1976. Distributed by Akademibokhandeln, University of Stockholm. $50. 23,000 entries with production source, cast, director and cameraman (where possible). Includes capsule studio histories and folio-size photographs. —J.F.

Lee, Rohama. *Film News Omnibus Vol. 1 and 2: Reviews of 16mm Films.* New York: Film News, 1979. $17.50 per volume, from ISBS, Inc., Box 555, Forest Grove, OR 97116. Reprinted from the magazine *Film News.* these volumes provide compact, informative descriptions of a vast range of mostly nonfiction films, together with credits and source information. —E.C.

Limbacher, James, ed. *Feature Films on 8mm. 16mm and Videotape.* New York: Bowker, 1979.

Limbacher, James L. *Haven't I Seen You Somewhere Before? Remakes, Sequels and Series in Motion Pictures and Television. 1896–1978.* Ann Arbor, Mich.: Pierian Press, 1979. $24.95. Limbacher devotes 240 pages to remakes, 10 pages to sequels, 25 pages to series. Wide-ranging, international listings, although the individual entries (title, country or production company, and year given for each) are scarcely full enough to identify a film, and some key titles (e.g., *Desiree* under "Napoleon") are missing. There are also some duplicated titles (e.g., under the "Old Mother Riley" series heading, *My Son. the Vampire* and *Old Mother Riley Meets the Vampire.* which are one and the same film). Of use in conjunction with other film reference books. —DON WILLIS

Marx, Kenneth S. *Star Stats: Who's Whose in Hollywood.* Los Angeles: Price/Stern/Sloan, 1979. Who's Who-type information on Hollywood actors, living and dead. Lists of supporting players. Studio executives. Various players are grouped by astrological significance. That's right. —J.F.

Maynard, Richard H. *Classroom Cinema.* New York: Teachers College Press, 1977. Advice to the classroom (probably English) teacher on film use. Annotated subject-categorized lists of shorts and features. —J.F.

Mitry, Jean. *Filmographie Universelle Tome XVII. Etats-Unis 1920/1945 Les Maîtres.* Publications du Service des Archives du Film du Centre National de La Cinématographie, 1979. Filmographies of John Ford, William Wyler, George Cukor, Alfred Hitchcock, Frank Capra, Sam Wood, Rouben Mamoulian, John Cromwell and William Keighley. Includes scriptwriters, actors, design, costume, and music. Summarized versions of non-directing credits. —J.F.

Moshier, W. Franklyn. *The Films of Jennifer Jones.* San Francisco: W. Franklyn Mosier. 1979. Credits, synopses, period reviews of films. —J.F.

Motion Pictures, Television and Radio: A Union Catalogue of Manuscripts and Special Collections in the Western United States. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1977.

New York Times Film Reviews, 1977–1978. New York: New York Times, 1979.

Parker, Barry. *The Folger Shakespeare Filmography.* Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1979. $5.95. A guide to feature films based on the works of Shakespeare, after 1929.

Perspective on English Avant-Garde Film, A. London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1979. A chronology of events, statements by various film-makers, and critical essays (actually the catalogue of an Arts Council touring exhibition).

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Thiery, Herman and Johan Daisne. *Dictionnaire Filmographique de la Litterature Mondiale.* Ghent. Story Scientia P.V.B.A. v.1 A-K, 1971; v.2 L-Z, 1975; Supplement A-Z, 1978. Filmographies (director, cast) alpabetical by author, illustrations (often rare), title index cross-referenced to authors. Handsomely printed. French, English, German, Dutch. —J.F.

Uricchio, Marylynn. *Film and Video Makers Directory.* Pittsburgh: Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, 1979. A guide to the whereabouts of hundreds of independent artists.

Wicking, Christopher and Tise Vahimagi. *The American Vein: Directors and Directions in Television.* New York: Dutton, 1979. $12.95 cloth, $6.95 paper. With television production so vastly outstripping current movie production, auteurism was bound to come sooner or later. This handy guide provides capsule summaries of the work of 300-odd directors who have come out of or are still active in TV; with generally astute and unpretentious critical assessments. The volume reminds us how close, in fact, are the relations between the two media; TV, despite its horrors, is still the major training ground for film talent. It is perhaps curious that this task of providing basic American information has been carried out by British writers; but perhaps it is explainable by the fact that film and TV seem less remote from each other in England. —E.C.

Zuker, Joel S. *Arthur Penn: A Guide to Reference & Resources.* Boston: G.K. Hall, 1979. $22.50. With a biographical note and brief critical essay.

Scripts

WISCONSIN/WARNER BROTHERS SCREENPLAY SERIES

The University of Wisconsin Press, under the general editorship of Tino Balio, is publishing a series of screenplays from the huge collection of files, prints, and screenplays donated by United Artists to the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research in 1969. (Eight hundred sound features and 1500 short subjects are included in the collection—a major scholarly resource.) The published scripts, of which the first batch are listed below—about 30 more are contemplated—are final shooting scripts as revised during production. Each volume includes an introduction by the volume editor. All these initial volumes are $12.50 clothbound, $4.95 paperback, from the University of Wisconsin Press.

Behlmer, Rudy, ed. *The Adventures of Robin Hood.* Behlmer's essay discusses original Warner's production plans (Cagney to star, Guy Kibbee as Friar Tuck), MGM's interest in a Jeannette MacDonald-Nelson Eddy Robin Hood operetta, rewrites, and circumstances of production. The script is followed by an appendicized Jousting Tournament sequence, intended to open the film but eliminated during the first week of production. —J.F.

Carringer, Robert L., ed. *The Jazz Singer.* Carringer's introduction traces the film's evolution from Samson Raphaelson's story "The Day of Atonement" to the Jessel play to Warner's sentimental movie, which disappointed Raphaelson. Contains the story, screenplay, period articles on Warner's and on Vitaphone, and a complete record of the musical score from the "Kol Nidre" to "Toot Toot Tootsie" by way of Tschaikowsky's *Romeo and Juliet Overture.* —J.F.

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Behlmer, Rudy, ed. *The Adventures of Robin Hood.* Behlmer's essay discusses original Warner's production plans (Cagney to star, Guy Kibbee as Friar Tuck), MGM's interest in a Jeannette MacDonald-Nelson Eddy Robin Hood operetta, rewrites, and circumstances of production. The script is followed by an appendicized Jousting Tournament sequence, intended to open the film but eliminated during the first week of production. —J.F.

Carringer, Robert L., ed. *The Jazz Singer.* Carringer's introduction traces the film's evolution from Samson Raphaelson's story "The Day of Atonement" to the Jessel play to Warner's sentimental movie, which disappointed Raphaelson. Contains the story, screenplay, period articles on Warner's and on Vitaphone, and a complete record of the musical score from the "Kol Nidre" to "Toot Toot Tootsie" by way of Tschaikowsky's *Romeo and Juliet Overture.* —J.F.

Cripps, Thomas, ed. *The Green Pastures.* Cripps's introduction to the Marc Connelly script covers Negro theater in the twenties and the play's original tactic to evoke interracial affection (unsuccessful by the film's release in 1936). —J.F.

Gomery, Douglas, ed. *High Sierra.* Gomery emphasizes the Warner Brothers production system in operation and the W.R. Burnett story as untypical gangster genre because it only follows a downfall. Is *High Sierra* really a major work, "the end of the classic gangster film and the beginning of *film noir*"? —J.F.

Hove, Arthur, ed. *Gold Diggers of 1933.* Introduction details the origins of the script and comments on the styles of Mervyn LeRoy and Busby Berkeley. —E.C.

Kawin, Bruce, ed. *To Have and Have Not.* Kawin's introduction is a comprehensive essay on the complicated process by which Hawks's initial wager to Hemingway that he could turn his worst novel into a movie finally—after scripts by Furthman and Faulkner—did indeed result in a movie. Kawin analyzes the changing dramatic strategies of the scripts (some of them enforced by government pressure to avoid Cuba references), the atmosphere on the set (Bacall was being groomed for instant stardom, was concealing from Hawks and Bogart that she was Jewish, and was falling in love with Bogart), and the modest but ultimately classical originality of the film, though it was originally taken as derivative of *Casablanca.* —E.C.

Koszarski, Richard, ed. *Mystery of the Wax Museum.*

Naremore, James, ed. *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre.* The introduction touches on B. Traven's anonymity and emphasizes Huston's sympathy with Popular Front thirties literature and with the film's generically untypical mode. Contains the finished screenplay. —J.F.

Dawson, Jan. *Alexander Kluge and The Occasional Work of a Female Slave.* New York: New York Zoetrope, 1977. A short script of Kluge's 1974 production plus portions of a 1974 interview reworked by Dawson at Kluge's request to explicate meanings with more concrete film examples. —J.F.

Disney, Walt. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.* New York: Viking, 1979. $29.95. A sumptuously printed version of the fairy tale, illustrated with sketches, layouts, and final artwork used in the Disney film. With brief notes on the illustrations and reminiscences of the making of the film. —E.C.

Durang, Christopher. *A History of the American Film.* New York: Avon, 1978. Script of the 1978 ANTA production. It's interesting to see theatrical emulation of techniques that film cribbed from the stage in the first place. —J.F.

Lathrop, William. *Little Stories From the Screen.* New York and London: Garland, 1978. 1917 synopses of period films from Vitagraph, Universal and Edison, including the continuity script for *The Heir of the Ages.* written by the book's author. —J.F.

Levitan, Eli. *Handbook of Animation Techniques.* New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1979. $24.95. A technical manual written in a flat style, but very fully illustrated. Lots of material on TV commercials. —E.C.

Maltz, Albert and Wald, Malvin. *The Naked City.* Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1979. $12.95 cloth, $4.95 paperback. With an afterword by Wald about the background of the script—which was based on actual research in the New York police files, and not on rehashes of Hammett or Chandler. —E.C.

Mann, Heinrich and Josef von Sternberg. *The Blue Angel.* New York: Ungar, 1979. $12.50 cloth, $4.95 paper. The Mann novel, an introductory note by Von Sternberg, and the script (drawn from the film; according to Von Sternberg, "no comprehensive scenario was ever made.").

Technical Works

Basten, Fred E. *Glorious Technicolor: The Movies' Magic Rainbow.* South Brunswick, NJ: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1980. $30.00. The story (occasionally derailed into accounts of photogenic actresses) of the Technicolor Corporation, its predecessors and rivals, and key films in its evolution. With color illustrations that accurately, if ironically, capture the characteristically overly-pink tones of the process. But a far greater irony is that Technicolor films, since they were recorded on three strips of B&W film, can be preserved indefinitely, while the Eastman color negative that displaced Technicolor in the fifties in already, in some cases, fading into oblivion. —E.C.

Croy, Homer. *How Motion Pictures Are Made.* New York: Arno, 1978. A reprint of a 1918 volume which features pre-history, contemporary production, and interesting material on animation, battlefront photography, advertising, and early research on "talking-pictures." Amply illustrated. —J.F.

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Eidsvik, Charles V. *Cineliteracy: Film Among the Arts.* New York: Horizon Press, 1979. $15.00. This is an ingenious attempt to discuss the processes by which we perceive and assimilate films—but using English and not psychological jargon. Eidsvik draws initially on thoughtful theorists like Arnheim, Gombrich, and Hall, but the book gradually turns into an uninspired survey of the recent evolution of the medium. —E.C.

Jarvie, I.C. *Movies as Social Criticism: Aspects of Their Social Psychology.* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1978. A book that describes its own beginning as a "survey" (of social science thought on the media, p. 12), goes on to a "review" (of a cycle of sixties films on marriage, p. 81), and then slips into a "digression" (on the relation of early cinema to its audience, p. 86), does not encourage rapt attention. That the effort lacks significant intellectual force in its overall development certainly does not help either. From the first sentence of the preface, "For far too long, movies were dismissed as social pap—mere popular entertainment," to the last sentence of the final chapter, "It will be interesting to see what influence these television events (the appearance of *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pitman* and *Roots*) will have on the movies," Jarvie's book wanders between clichés (the movies are *still* dismissed as pap; the movies have *always* been regarded seriously: the questions are by whom and why) and tepid assertions (dozens of other television events are also "interesting" in their implications). At times, Jarvie's model appears to be Garth Jowett's *Film: The Democratic Art.* He does provide useful summaries of a fair amount of sociologically oriented research on the movie industry, but organizes the material less comprehensively and rigorously than Jowett. He also contributes the helpful identification of several motifs in sixties and seventies films about marriage—this, in fact, being the most original portion of the book and well worth reading. Regrettably, though, Jarvie does not move beyond identification to a strong argument about their relationship to social change. (He suggests that films like *Joe, Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice, Carnal Knowledge, Blume in Love, Loving* tell the "truth about America" to a greater degree than ever before, but then discusses the films largely in terms of simple plot summary.) The kind of precise relation, mediated by specific mechanisms at work in narrative discourse which we find in Will Wright's *Sixguns and Society* or *Cahiers du Cinéma's Young Mr. Lincoln* article, is never posed. (The possibility that rigorous formal study beyond the level of plot summary might be a necessity never even draws Jarvie's attention.) After surveying an issue such as how movies function for their audience, and arguing that answers like "escape" are inadequate, Jarvie is liable to succumb to pronouncements like, "This suggests, what I believe to be the case, that movies have multiple functions." *Movies as Social Criticism* contains a helpful bibliography (though not annotated or as extensive as that in the author's earlier and more sweeping survey, *Movies and Society*), but as a whole it makes only a minor contribution to an area of major importance—the relationship between movies and the historical context in which they appear.

—BILL NICHOLS

Macherey, Pierre. *A Theory of Literary Production.* London and Boston: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1978. $19.95. Essays on Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, Lenin, Jules Verne, Defoe, Borges and Balzac first published in France in 1966. Plus a systematic theoretical extension of early Althusser. —J.F.

Miscellaneous

Allen, Don, Ed. *The World of Film and Filmmakers: A Visual History.* New York: Crown, 1979. 240 pp. $19.95. A very curious work, this volume is a sort of encyclopedia-collage, with lots of illustrations, evidently aimed at a gift-book or introductory market yet with occasional patches of rather technical material. There is a short "reference section," some nice graphics about the internal workings of theaters and film machinery, and articles on genres, technology, censorship and other matters supplement the basically chronological decade-by-decade organization. —E.C.

Colombo, Robert John. *Popcorn in Paradise.* New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1980. $9.95. Some 3,000 quotes from Hollywood personalities.

Conant, Michael. *Antitrust in the Motion Picture Industry.* New York: Arno, 1978. Reprint of a 1960 analysis and evaluation of the impact of antitrust action on the structure, behavior and performance of the Hollywood film industry. —J.F.

Everson, William K. *Love in the Film: Screen Romance from the Silent Days to the Present.* Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1979. $14.95. The distinguished film historian presents his personal choices of interesting (and often neglected) films about love—from 1912 to *Annie Hall.* Copiously illustrated, with captions and brief essays on each film. —E.C.

Finch, Christopher and Linda Rosenkrantz. *Gone Holly-*

Eberwein, Robert T. *A Viewer's Guide to Film Theory and Criticism.* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1979. $12.50. Brief and rather dutiful (but dispassionate and accurate) accounts of the basic contentions of major theorists and critics. Like most such capsulizations, no substitute for reading the originals. —E.C.

Eidsvik, Charles V. *Cineliteracy: Film Among the Arts.* New York: Horizon Press, 1979. $15.00. This is an ingenious attempt to discuss the processes by which we perceive and assimilate films—but using English and not psychological jargon. Eidsvik draws initially on thoughtful theorists like Arnheim, Gombrich, and Hall, but the book gradually turns into an uninspired survey of the recent evolution of the medium. —E.C.

Jarvie, I.C. *Movies as Social Criticism: Aspects of Their Social Psychology.* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1978. A book that describes its own beginning as a "survey" (of social science thought on the media, p. 12), goes on to a "review" (of a cycle of sixties films on marriage, p. 81), and then slips into a "digression" (on the relation of early cinema to its audience, p. 86), does not encourage rapt attention. That the effort lacks significant intellectual force in its overall development certainly does not help either. From the first sentence of the preface, "For far too long, movies were dismissed as social pap—mere popular entertainment," to the last sentence of the final chapter, "It will be interesting to see what influence these television events (the appearance of *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pitman* and *Roots*) will have on the movies," Jarvie's book wanders between clichés (the movies are *still* dismissed as pap; the movies have *always* been regarded seriously: the questions are by whom and why) and tepid assertions (dozens of other television events are also "interesting" in their implications). At times, Jarvie's model appears to be Garth Jowett's *Film: The Democratic Art.* He does provide useful summaries of a fair amount of sociologically oriented research on the movie industry, but organizes the material less comprehensively and rigorously than Jowett. He also contributes the helpful identification of several motifs in sixties and seventies films about marriage—this, in fact, being the most original portion of the book and well worth reading. Regrettably, though, Jarvie does not move beyond identification to a strong argument about their relationship to social change. (He suggests that films like *Joe, Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice, Carnal Knowledge, Blume in Love, Loving* tell the "truth about America" to a greater degree than ever before, but then discusses the films largely in terms of simple plot summary.) The kind of precise relation, mediated by specific mechanisms at work in narrative discourse which we find in Will Wright's *Sixguns and Society* or *Cahiers du Cinéma's Young Mr. Lincoln* article, is never posed. (The possibility that rigorous formal study beyond the level of plot summary might be a necessity never even draws Jarvie's attention.) After surveying an issue such as how movies function for their audience, and arguing that answers like "escape" are inadequate, Jarvie is liable to succumb to pronouncements like, "This suggests, what I believe to be the case, that movies have multiple functions." *Movies as Social Criticism* contains a helpful bibliography (though not annotated or as extensive as that in the author's earlier and more sweeping survey, *Movies and Society*), but as a whole it makes only a minor contribution to an area of major importance—the relationship between movies and the historical context in which they appear.

—BILL NICHOLS

Macherey, Pierre. *A Theory of Literary Production.* London and Boston: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1978. $19.95. Essays on Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, Lenin, Jules Verne, Defoe, Borges and Balzac first published in France in 1966. Plus a systematic theoretical extension of early Althusser. —J.F.

Miscellaneous

Allen, Don, Ed. *The World of Film and Filmmakers: A Visual History.* New York: Crown, 1979. 240 pp. $19.95. A very curious work, this volume is a sort of encyclopedia-collage, with lots of illustrations, evidently aimed at a gift-book or introductory market yet with occasional patches of rather technical material. There is a short "reference section," some nice graphics about the internal workings of theaters and film machinery, and articles on genres, technology, censorship and other matters supplement the basically chronological decade-by-decade organization. —E.C.

Colombo, Robert John. *Popcorn in Paradise.* New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1980. $9.95. Some 3,000 quotes from Hollywood personalities.

Conant, Michael. *Antitrust in the Motion Picture Industry.* New York: Arno, 1978. Reprint of a 1960 analysis and evaluation of the impact of antitrust action on the structure, behavior and performance of the Hollywood film industry. —J.F.

Everson, William K. *Love in the Film: Screen Romance from the Silent Days to the Present.* Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1979. $14.95. The distinguished film historian presents his personal choices of interesting (and often neglected) films about love—from 1912 to *Annie Hall.* Copiously illustrated, with captions and brief essays on each film. —E.C.

Finch, Christopher and Linda Rosenkrantz. *Gone Holly-*

wood. Garden City: Doubleday, 1979. A kaleidoscope of Hollywood society in its heyday: agents, children, salaries, fights, investments, parties, pranks, publicity. —J.F.

Gershuny, Theodore. *Soon To Be A Major Motion Picture.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980. $14.95. Gershuny is trying to play in the league of Lillian Ross's *Picture.* His book is a readable and useful one, but doesn't make the playoffs. The film he chose to follow the making of (Preminger's multimillion-dollar disaster, *Rosebud*) was at least as vexed with troubles as was Huston's *Red Badge of Courage.* However, Gershuny adopts a more journalistic method of recounting them, and he doesn't have Ross's unusual gifts for subtle characterization. Nonetheless, his account is fuller in many ways—having directed films himself, he can make sense of the million technical foul-ups that shooting involves—and since *Rosebud* was plagued with practically every known foul-up this gives the tale a melancholy downward line and even, in time, a kind of doomed grandeur. Neophyte performers, linguistic difficulties, Preminger's grating directorial control, financial and technical constraints, a mutinous crew operating on an unrelenting location schedule, a script whose problems were never licked: as Gershuny puts it, "little by little, . . . the design of the piece chipped away, leaving only intractable reality." The wonder of it, of course, is not particularly that *Rosebud* turned out to be a failure, but that films get made at all, and that sometimes, by an unpredictable concatenation of luck and design, they turn out beautiful and right—a miracle that Preminger had brought off before, and might have brought off again. —E.C.

Gombrich, Ernest Hans Josef. *Means and Ends: Reflections on the History of Fresco Painting.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1976. $9.95. Gombrich's monograph on the conflict between means of illusion and ends of decorative design has practical value for iconographic analysis in film genre study. E.g., "What looks like another purely formal or decorative device has the profoundest consequences on the resources of the image. It enables the artist to recapture that unity of the symbolic, the narrative and the decorative . . ." —J.F.

Herschensohn, Wes. *Resurrection in Cannes: The Making of* The Picasso Summer. New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1979. $14.50. A lengthy and sometimes rather appealingly egomaniacal account of the making of a film that got dumped during a change of guard at Warner Brothers; it featured some apparently very striking animation based on Picasso work (including *Guernica*). The behind-the-screen tale involves breathless meetings with famous people, including Picasso himself, Audrey Hepburn, Ray Bradbury, Dominguin, etc., a lot of gossip, and an endless succession of women, each more intriguing, ravishing, and tantalizing than the last: all in all, a rather endearingly silly book. —E.C.

Higham, Charles. *Celebrity Circus.* New York: Delacorte, 1979. Reprints of Higham articles on actors, directors and writers. —J.F.

McClelland, Doug. *The Golden Age of 'B' Movies.* Nashville: Charter House, 1978. Credits, text and pictures of major-minor features, mostly from early World War II, e.g. *Confessions of Boston Blackie, The Mad Ghoul, The Wolf Man.* —J.F.

Manvell, Roger. *Shakespeare and the Film.* New York: A. S. Barnes, 1979. 182 pp. $4.95. A reissue of Manvell's 1971 study, updated with a brief postscript on Kozintzev's *Lear* (a masterpiece, whose making Kozintzev himself chronicles in *King Lear: The Space of Tragedy*) and Polanski's *Macbeth.* —E.C.

Manvell, Roger. *Theater and Film.* Cranbury, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1979. $18.00. Very detailed discussions of a dozen important film adaptations of major English-language plays *(Electra* and *Miss Julie* are also included). —E.C.

Marshall, Herbert. *Sergei Eisenstein's* The Battleship Potemkin. New York: Avon, 1978. $7.95, paperback. Documents on the shooting and reception of *Potemkin* —which ranged from hysterical censorship throughout Europe to Hollywood's attempt to emulate its "techniques." Mainly from a Russian volume (Naum Kleiman and K. B. Levina, *Battleship Potemkin,* Iskusstvo, 1969) whose publication had been planned for three decades and repeatedly postponed for political reasons; supplemented by various new articles and a passionately anti-Stalinist introduction by Marshall. —E.C.

The Modern American Novel and the Movies. New York: Ungar, 1979. Thirty-two essays on adaptations, including Norman Mailer's and Joseph Heller's responses to questions (both reprints, like several other inclusions). There is some effort to focus material on *conscious* awareness of ideological concerns. Contains a filmography of adaptations and a bibliography. —J.F.

Morrow, James and Murray Suid. *Moviemaking Illustrated: The Comic Filmbook.* Rochelle Park, NJ: Hayden, 1978. All editing students may not be familiar with this volume, which first appeared in 1973, and is now in a ninth printing. Narrative continuities are defined and imaginatively illustrated with panels from Marvel Comics: Hulk, Spiderman, Falcon, Ka-zar and the gang. —J.F.

Murray, Lawrence. *The Celluloid Persuasion.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980. $6.95 paper. A discussion of the uses of films in the

liberal arts classroom, aimed at teachers who are just learning the ropes. —E.C.

Parish, James Robert. *The Funsters.* New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1979. Short essays on sixty-two Hollywood comedians, Abbott and Costello to Ed Wynn. —J.F.

Ruchti, Ulrich and Sybil Taylor. *Story into Film.* New York: Dell, 1978. $1.75. On facing pages, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," "The Masque of the Red Death," and "The Signalman" (Dickens) are set against film counterparts by Robert Enrico, Pavao Stalter of Zagreb and Nathan Zucker, who adapted the Dickens for TV in the early fifties. Each director is interviewed; the one with Enrico is most extensive. Poe's story is sometimes reparagraphed, perhaps to conform to layout. —J.F.

Schlossheimer, Michael. *The Films You Don't See on Television.* New York: Vantage Press, 1979. $6.95. Rambling studio mini-histories, with miscellaneous observations on rights hang-ups and other problems that restrict TV broadcasting of movies. —E.C.

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Sennett, Ted. *Masters of Menace: Greenstreet and Lorre.* New York: Dutton, 1979. Career essays: before the Falcon, together, apart. —J.F.

Sjöman, Vilgot. *L136: Diary with Ingmar Bergman.* Ann Arbor: Karoma, 1978. An extraordinary record of *Winter Light's* conception, execution, and reception derived from intimate contact with Bergman. (L136 is the script's serial number.) —J.F.

Thomson, David. *America in the Dark: The Impact of Hollywood Films on American Culture.* New York: Morrow, 1979. $4.95, paper. A reissue of this book of general but intelligent essays.

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Yost, Elwy. *Magic Moments From the Movies.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1978. Paragraph-to-page essays on approximately 150 features from *Shoulder Arms* to the seventies. —J.F.

Controversy & Correspondence

LANG AND HIS CRITICS

I was extremely disappointed to find a film journal with the standing and quality of *Film Quarterly* publishing such a silly piece on Fritz Lang. Had the essay appeared in a less widely read and highly respected periodical, it would not have even been worth responding to.

To begin with, the title of the article, "Fritz Lang: Only Melodrama," begs the whole question: critics, by and large, are not arguing (and never have argued), that Lang was a great *artist;* they rather *begin* with the obvious fact that he is mainly making melodramas, but they go on to show what he was able to achieve within that form, and that melodrama can reach surprisingly high levels in the hands of a skilled director.

Second, Willis is very limited, in his discussion of Lang criticism, by the fact that he apparently knows only the four extremely inadequate Lang books written in English, and refers only to English-language articles. The majority of serious, well-argued, and theoretically innovative articles emerged in French and German film journals from 1958 onwards, and the best full-length book on Lang, is, fittingly enough, that produced in the German Reihe series by Enno Patalas, Frieda Grafe and Hans Helmut Prinzler. The debate about Lang's worth, quality and importance has been argued since the 1920's in a complex, on-going debate in France, Germany, and England, where Lang by no means received the kind of defensive, partly apologizing praise that Willis is objecting to in some British and American critics. Even in talking about these essays, Willis's quotations are unfairly chosen and misleading. Willis also misleads in suggesting (presumably from Ott's selection and translation of a few German reviews) that Lang's works were unambiguously praised when they appeared in Germany in the 1920's. Many of the reviews show clearly the severe condemnation the films received, exactly along the lines of Willis's own statements. Rudolf Arnheim, for instance, criticized every Lang film for indulgence in ornamentalism and/or lack of serious attention to ideas. In the 1960's when young German

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critics began to pay attention to Lang, they also found fault with most of what they saw, especially in the American films. Thus, Willis's criticisms of Lang's films offer nothing new or original: the same thing has already been said many times over by critics in Germany, France and England who have questioned Lang's genius. Since there is a critical tradition representing this view of Lang, there was no need for Willis to reiterate the position.

I do not personally agree with this tradition of Lang criticism, and consider the French position much closer to the truth. As I point out in one of the introductory chapters to my book *Fritz Lang* (to be published shortly by G. K. Hall) where I summarize the history of Lang criticism, this tradition has to be placed in the context of a now largely outmoded approach to films, using aesthetic criteria derived from literary scholarship. It goes without saying that most popular culture is not "great art," judged by the aesthetic and intellectual criteria derived from major works in the history of Western literature. But this does not mean that certain directors do not use popular forms in a brilliant way so as to make important statements—political, ideological, moral or human—or do not handle their forms (within their given limits) so as to produce stunning visual compositions and other aesthetically pleasing effects.

Willis's article highlights the need for the Hall series: too few American scholars speak foreign languages, or keep up with the foreign materials necessary to sound scholarly pronouncement on film directors. Until the late 60's, writing about film in the English language had been largely unscholarly and unprofessional; we are finally entering a period in this country where film writing is becoming more scholarly and more well-informed. Willis of course has a right to any view of Lang that he wishes; what I most object to is the assumption that he is the first to see Lang in this way, and that he has a finer aesthetic judgment than people who went before him. If we were indeed, left to judge Lang's work on the basis of Willis's review, Lang would surely be in trouble.

—ANN KAPLAN

REPLY FROM DON WILLIS

Ms. Kaplan paints an intriguing picture of an English-language world of Lang criticism that's chillingly barren, complemented by a foreign-language world of Lang criticism that's impossibly fecund. I mistrust both halves of this picture. I might suggest, for instance, that her sweeping dismissal of "the four extremely inadequate Lang books written in English" is perhaps not entirely disinterested. (And as I stated in my article I find the Jensen book quite adequate as criticism.) The above-quoted phrase is also factually incorrect, or misleading. The Oxford Eisner is a *translation*—acknowledging that fact might weaken Ms. Kaplan's argument that the only Lang criticism is in French and German. Of course one can sympathize with the need she apparently feels to make film "respectable" in academic circles by making it inaccessible, but a foreign-language-criticism requirement is a bit much. (Incidentally, I *have* read Lang criticism in a foreign language—semiology.) Ms. Kaplan seems to find "foreign materials" more essential to "sound scholarly pronouncement on film directors" than the films themselves. For my part I should point out that I was not writing a history of Lang criticism, but an essay on his films. The notes on the books, I blush to admit, were simply a pretext.

Ms. Kaplan apparently read only the title and the first few sections of my article. I was not (knowingly or unknowingly) "reiterating" some "young German critic" 's (or anybody's) anti-Lang diatribe. A fully-accredited anti-Lang school may exist in Europe, but I personally would not find it worthwhile spending a lot of time and space on a director I considered of no interest or talent. I am very glad to champion, for instance, Lang's version of *Liliom* as one of the great "lost" films; moreover I value the haunting echoes of that film's conception of character which can be found throughout Lang's work.

Ms. Kaplan seems surprisingly queasy about the idea of Lang as artist, if she can't quite reject it altogether. (Her back-door Lang is capable of "aesthetically pleasing effects.") I might wholly reject the idea myself if it weren't for the existence of *Liliom* and *Kriemhild's Revenge* and several longer or shorter passages in Lang's work. But they do exist, and I wouldn't want to concede them to the domain of pure melodrama (as she does), nor I'm sure would Andrew Sarris, Jonathan Rosenbaum, or the late Otis Ferguson, who use words like "artist" and "vision" in connection with Lang, those critics "by and large" notwithstanding. Ms. Kaplan's odd, apologetic defense of "non-artist" Lang is confusing, and was perhaps intended to be so. Her Lang is, on the one hand, "mainly making melodramas," yet also making "important statements" within his self-circumscribed area. It's as if she's attempting to defuse in advance attacks on both Lang the melodramatist and Lang the artist: if, for example, a Lang film like *You Only Live Once* is acknowledged to be poor melodrama, well, it does have compensating sociopolitical resonance; or if a Lang like *Metropolis* is seen to be sociologically shaky, well, it does have its melodramatic excitements. Ms. Kaplan doesn't seem to want to see the alternate view of Lang as—in films like *Dr. Mabuse* ("A Portrait of Our Time"), *Metropolis, M, You Only Live Once,* and *Hangmen Also Die!*—not so much *raising* melodrama to "surprisingly high levels" as reducing complex social issues to melodrama (and low-level melodrama at that, in some cases).

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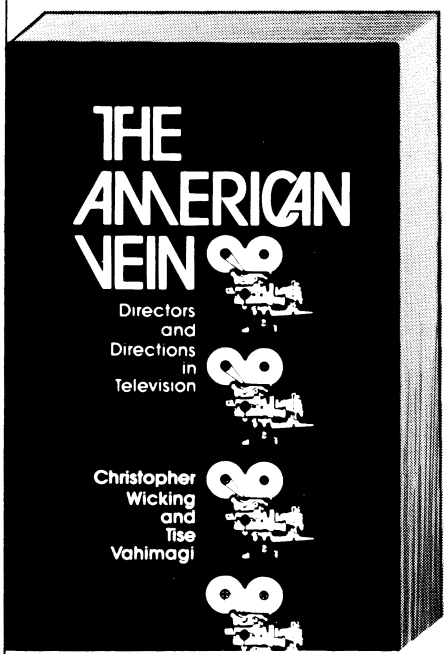

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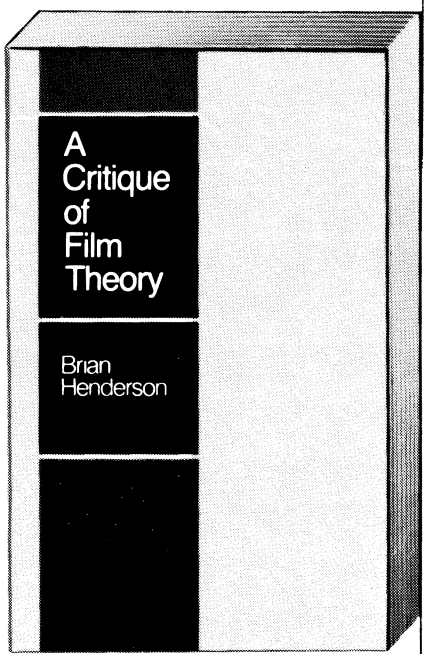

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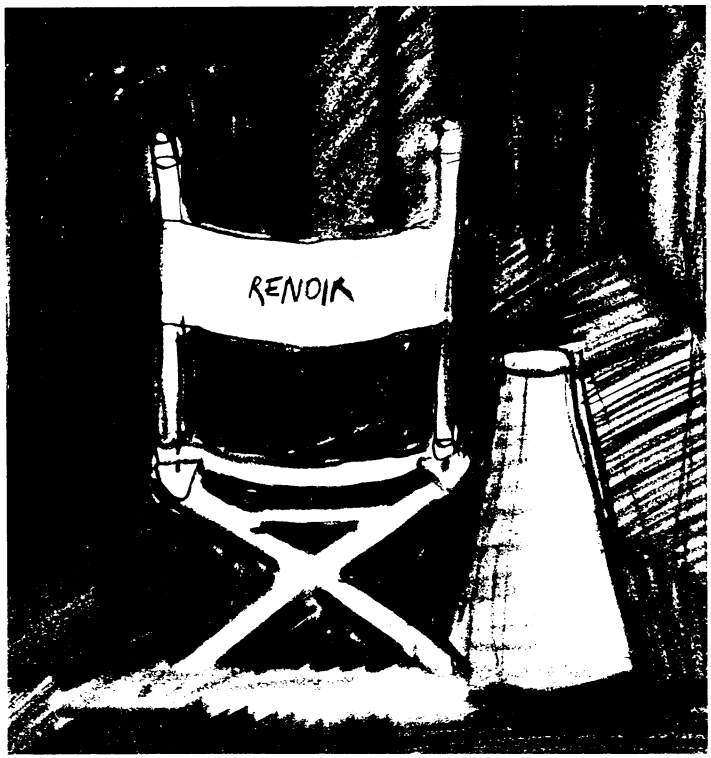

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